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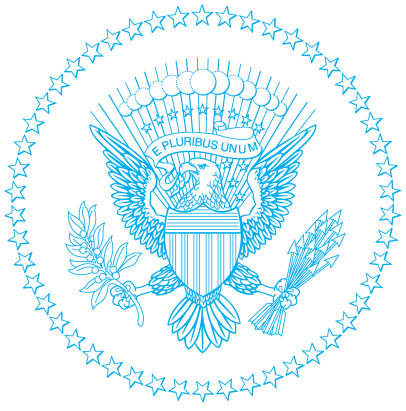
OF THE
UNITED STATES

George W. Bush



2005

(IN TWO BOOKS)

BOOK II—JULY 1 TO DECEMBER 31, 2005

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Foreword

This volume collects my speeches and papers from the second half of 2005.

As this period began, the world was given a painful reminder of the ruthlessness of freedom's enemies. On the morning of July 7, members of a terrorist cell in England detonated bombs throughout London's public transportation system, killing 52 people and injuring more than 700. This attack took place as members of the G–8 were meeting in Gleneagles, Scotland. The terrorists' act illustrated the stark contrast between their hateful ideology and the hopeful vision of free nations—which were at the very same time working on a plan for combating poverty and disease in Africa.

During these months, America continued to take on the forces of radicalism throughout the world. Our men and women in uniform continued their urgent missions in Afghanistan and Iraq, where their efforts brought the hope of democracy to nations that had spent decades oppressed by tyranny. In Afghanistan, citizens braved deadly attacks and threats of violence to participate in their country's first parliamentary election in more than 30 years. In Iraq, citizens overcame similar threats to ratify a constitution, hold parliamentary elections, and put Saddam Hussein on trial for decades of crimes against his people. At year's end, I spoke to the American people from the Oval Office and said, "I know this war is controversial—yet being your President requires doing what I believe is right and accepting the consequences. And I have never been more certain that America's actions in Iraq are essential to the security of our citizens and will lay the foundation of peace for our children and grandchildren."

While we worked tirelessly to defeat our enemies, my Administration also engaged in extensive diplomacy with America's allies. In August, I met with President Alvaro Uribe of Colombia and discussed our mutual efforts to fight drug trafficking and terrorism. In October, I continued America's role in promoting Middle East peace by hosting Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas at the White House. In November, the First Lady and I traveled to Latin America, visiting Argentina, Brazil, and Panama. While there, I spoke about the importance of democracy, freedom, and social justice in our hemisphere. And in my final international trip of the year, Laura and I traveled to Asia, where I attended the leaders' meeting of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation and visited China, Japan, Mongolia, and South Korea.

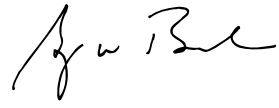
As America focused on these priorities abroad, we also made progress at home. In July, I signed the "Patient Safety and Quality Improvement Act of 2005," a bill aimed at reducing medical errors and injuries through greater information-sharing in the health care industry. The Congress approved—and I was proud to sign—the

"Dominican Republic-Central America Free Trade Agreement," an economic pact that promoted prosperity and sent a strong signal of support to young democracies in the region.

In late August, America was shocked and saddened by the destruction caused by Hurricane Katrina, the most destructive natural disaster in our Nation's history. The storm did widespread damage throughout the Gulf Coast, striking Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama, and Florida—an area roughly the size of Great Britain. In New Orleans, the breaching of the levees left much of the city underwater and devastated the population. By the time the storm had passed, it had taken more than 1,300 lives. The Federal response to this catastrophe was unacceptable—and I pledged to reform the Government's emergency management procedures to ensure we were better prepared for future natural disasters.

In September, I spoke to the American people from Jackson Square in New Orleans and said that we would help rebuild communities that had been damaged or destroyed by the hurricane. I told the people of the Gulf Coast, "I know that when you sit on the steps of a porch where a home once stood, or sleep on a cot in a crowded shelter, it is hard to imagine a bright future. But that future will come. The streets of Biloxi and Gulfport will again be filled with lovely homes and the sound of children playing. The churches of Alabama will have their broken steeples mended and their congregations whole. And here in New Orleans, the street cars will once again rumble down St. Charles, and the passionate soul of a great city will return."

Finally, the year saw dramatic change at the Supreme Court, with the retirement announcement of Associated Justice Sandra Day O'Connor in July and the death of Chief Justice William Rehnquist in September. I committed to nominate replacements who would be prudent in exercising judicial power, firm in defending judicial independence, and, above all, faithful guardians of the Constitution. America saw these ambitious goals met with the confirmation of John Roberts as the 17th Chief Justice of the United States in September. And as the year closed, another talented jurist, Samuel Alito, awaited confirmation to our country's highest court.



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 July 1–December 31, 2005. 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. At the request of the Office of the Press Secretary, the Bush property known as Prairie Chapel Ranch in Crawford, Texas, is referred to simply as the Bush Ranch. 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 meet-

ings, 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. The Chief Editor of this book was Stacey A. Mulligan, assisted by William K. Banks, Loretta F. Cochran, Lois Davis, Kathleen M. Fargey, Stephen J. Frattini, Michael J. Forcina, Allison M. Gavin, Gwendolyn J. Henderson, Diane Hiltabidle, Alfred Jones, Joshua H. Liberatore, Heather N. McDaniel, Ashley Merusi, Amelia E. Otovo, Jennifer M. Partridge, D. Gregory Perrin, Matthew R. Regan, and Michael J. Sullivan.

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 Robert C. Tapella, Public Printer.

Raymond A. Mosley
Director of the Federal Register

Adrienne C. Thomas
Acting Archivist of the United States

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Attorney General	Alberto R. Gonzales
Secretary of the Interior	Gale A. Norton
Secretary of Agriculture	Mike Johanns
Secretary of Commerce	Carlos M. Gutierrez
Secretary of Labor	Elaine L. Chao
Secretary of Health and Human Services	Michael O. Leavitt
Secretary of Housing and Urban Development	Alphonso R. Jackson
Secretary of Transportation	Norman Y. Mineta
Secretary of Energy	Samuel W. Bodman
Secretary of Education	Margaret Spellings
Secretary of Veterans Affairs	R. James Nicholson
Secretary of Homeland Security	Michael Chertoff
Chief of Staff	Andrew H. Card, Jr.
Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency	Stephen L. Johnson
United States Trade Representative	Robert J. Portman

Director of the Office of Management and Budget ..... Joshua B. Bolten

Director of National Drug Control Policy ..... John P. Walters

Administration of George W. Bush

2005

Remarks on the Resignation of Justice Sandra Day O'Connor From the Supreme Court of the United States

July 1, 2005

Good morning. A short time ago, I had a warm conversation with Justice Sandra Day O'Connor, who has decided to retire from the Supreme Court of the United States. America is proud of Justice O'Connor's distinguished service, and I'm proud to know her. Today, she has the gratitude of her fellow citizens, and she and John and their family have our respect and good wishes.

Sandra Day O'Connor joined the Nation's highest court in 1981 as the first woman ever appointed to that position. Throughout her tenure she has been a discerning and conscientious judge and a public servant of complete integrity. Justice O'Connor's great intellect, wisdom, and personal decency have won her the esteem of her colleagues and our country.

Under the Constitution, I am responsible for nominating a successor to Justice O'Connor. I take this responsibility seriously. I will be deliberate and thorough in this process. I have directed my staff, in cooperation with the Department of Justice, to compile information and recommend for my review potential nominees who meet a high standard of legal ability, judgment, and integrity and who will faithfully interpret the Constitution and laws of our country.

As well I will continue to consult, as will my advisers, with Members of the United States Senate. The Nation deserves and I will select a Supreme Court Justice that Americans can be proud of. The Nation also deserves a dignified process of confirmation in the United States Senate, characterized by fair treatment, a fair hearing, and a fair vote. I will choose a nominee in a timely manner so that the hearing and the vote can be completed before the new Supreme Court term begins.

Today, however, is a day to honor the contributions of a fine citizen and a great patriot. Many years ago, Sandra Day O'Connor chose the path of public service, and she served with distinction as a legislator and a judge in Arizona before joining the Supreme Court. When President Ronald Reagan appointed Justice O'Connor 24 years ago, Americans had high expectations of her, and she has surpassed those expectations in the performance of her duties.

This great lady, born in El Paso, Texas, rose above the obstacles of an earlier time and became one of the most admired Americans of our time. She leaves an outstanding record of service to the United States, and our Nation is deeply grateful.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:16 a.m. in the Rose Garden at the White House.

Message on the Observance of Independence Day, 2005
July 1, 2005

Since July 4, 1776, Americans have experienced freedom's power to overcome tyranny, inspire hope in times of trial, and turn the creative gifts of men and women to the pursuits of peace. Across generations, our Nation has defended and advanced liberty.

The words of our Founding Fathers first guided a country of 4 million souls, yet they put large events in motion. When the Liberty Bell sounded at the first public reading of the Declaration of Independence, one who witnessed the birth of freedom in our country said, "It rang as if it meant something." In our time it means something still. America continues to proclaim liberty throughout the world, and we remain a country full of hope and promise where opportunity thrives, where all stand equal before the law, and where our freedoms are celebrated.

Americans live in freedom because of the enduring power of our ideals. In the midst of World War II, President Franklin Delano Roosevelt reminded our troops that our Nation believes in the "right to liberty under God—for all peoples and races and groups and nations, everywhere in the world." Today, a new generation of Americans continues to defend our Nation and spread freedom. On this Fourth of July, we honor the brave men and women of our military, and their families, and we express our gratitude for their courage, dedication to duty, and love of country.

Laura and I send our best wishes to all Americans on Independence Day. May God bless you, and may God continue to bless America.

GEORGE W. BUSH

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

The President's Radio Address
July 2, 2005

Good morning. Laura and I wish all Americans a happy Fourth of July weekend. I look forward to celebrating Independence Day with the people of Morgantown, West Virginia. On the Fourth of July, we remember the vision and conviction of America's Founders. We remember the ideals of liberty that led men from 13 Colonies to gather in Philadelphia and pen a declaration of self-evident truths. And we remember the extraordinary personal courage that made their efforts a success. Doctor Benjamin Rush said that signing the Declaration of Independence was "like signing your own death warrant." He signed it anyway—right above his fellow Pennsylvania delegate, Benjamin Franklin.

On Independence Day, we are also mindful that the promises of the Declaration have been secured by the service and sacrifice of every generation. America's first defenders were mostly farmers, artisans, and shopkeepers who waged a desperate fight for independence. Our Union was preserved through the costly battles of the Civil War, including one at Vicksburg that ended on Independence Day, 1863. And we live in freedom because Americans prevailed in the hard-fought struggles of the

20th century from the Marne and Normandy to Iwo Jima and Inchon Bay. America is home to 25 million military veterans, and we will always be grateful for their unselfish courage.

Today, a new generation of Americans is defending our freedom against determined enemies. At posts in Afghanistan, Iraq, and around the world, our men and women in uniform are taking the fight to the terrorists overseas, so that we do not have to face the terrorists here at home. And by freeing millions from oppression, our Armed Forces are redeeming a universal principle of the Declaration that all are created equal, and all are meant to be free. Those who serve today are taking their rightful place among the greatest generations that have worn our Nation's uniform.

The burden of war falls especially hard on military families, and I thank them for the support they give our troops in their vital work. Some of America's finest men and women have given their lives in the war on terror, and we remember them on Independence Day. We pray for the families who have lost a loved one in freedom's cause. And we know that the best way to honor the lives that have been given in this struggle is to complete the mission, so we will stay in the fight until the fight is won.

In this time of testing, all our troops and their families can know that the American people are behind them. On this Fourth of July weekend, I ask every American to find a way to thank men and women defending our freedom by flying the flag, sending letters to our troops in the field, and helping the military family down the street. The Department of Defense has set up a web site, americasupportsyou.mil. You can go there to learn about private efforts in your own community. At this time when we celebrate our freedom, we will stand with the men and women who defend us all.

In the summer of 1776, John Adams called the American Revolution "the most complete, unexpected, and remarkable of any in the history of nations." And 229 years later, history has proved him right. The Fourth of July is a day to be proud of our heritage as freedom's home and defender. It is a day to be confident in the future, because the spirit of our Founders still shapes the conscience of our country. Above all, it is a day to give thanks to God for His many blessings on America and for the privilege to call ourselves citizens of this special land. I hope all Americans enjoy a memorable and safe Independence Day celebration.

Thank you for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 7:50 a.m. on July 1 in the Cabinet Room at the White House for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on July 2. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on July 1 but was embargoed for release until the broadcast. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of this address.

Interview With Foreign Print Journalists
June 30, 2005

The President. Just a couple of comments. One, I'm looking forward to going to the G–8. It's always a good opportunity to talk about common values, common interests, ways we can work together to improve the world. I'm looking forward to seeing the leaders. I've got a good personal

relationship with the leaders. It's a good chance to visit.

Agenda items are—important agenda items: Africa, I just gave a speech on the continent of Africa; global climate change, it's important to move the debate beyond the Kyoto era and talk about what we can do together to improve the environment. I'm looking forward to that. One of the things there hasn't been much focus on is, there will be time to discuss progress in the Middle East—the Middle East peace process. Jim Wolfensohn is coming to discuss a way forward, how we can all help the Palestinians improve their security, enhance the entrepreneurial spirit so people can see their lives improve. We're looking forward to that.

Anyway, it's going to be a good trip. I'm looking forward to going to Denmark. The Prime Minister is a friend. He's a good man. He's got a good, strong backbone. When he says he's going to do something, he means it. I'm looking forward to seeing Her Majesty the Queen. It's going to be a good experience. I've never been to Denmark, so I'm looking forward to going.

Charlie, we'll start with you, and then we'll do a couple of rounds, and I'll let you all go get some lunch.

Aid to Africa

Q. All right. My first question really is an aid question, with respect to Africa. Mr. Blair has really been pressing this issue of dramatically increased aid to Africa. You have substantially increased U.S. assistance to Africa, but on the other hand, it falls way short of what Mr. Blair has been asking for. You've been really, I think, fairly cool to both the $25 billion that he's asked and the commitment for, what is it, seven-tenths of a percent of GDP for foreign assistance.

The President. A couple of comments on that. One is that our aid increase has been dramatic. We've tripled our aid since I've been President, and I just announced today that I'll ask Congress to double it by 2010, which is a significant increase.

Secondly, though, you've got to look at Africa as more than just aid. Aid is one aspect of participating on the continent in a compassionate way. Trade is a vital part of lifting people out of poverty.

The other thing is, you know, there's all kinds of ways to calculate generosity. I happen to think that the formula that some people try to use is not an effective way to judge America's generosity or a fair way. For example, we've got a Tax Code structure to encourage private citizens to contribute. And so I will remind our G–8 friends that aid to developing countries is more than just grants from Government. It is grants from Government. It is generous contributions by private individuals, and we contribute billions on an annual basis.

I'm also going to tell people that a compassionate policy is one that focuses less on formulas and more on improving people's lives. And so today I talked about the malaria initiative, for example. There's a great place where the G–8 countries can come together and help nations on the continent of Africa eradicate malaria.

So I'm going to the G–8 with an agenda, where we've been the leader. The HIV/AIDS initiative was a powerful statement of our compassion and our willingness to take the lead on a lot of issues.

Klaus.

Iraq/War on Terror

Q. Another subject which will be in some way at the G–8 meeting also, Iraq. Denmark is contributing a substantial proportion of the amount of troops to the conflict. Your most recent speech continuously made the link between the conflict and 9/11. How do you react towards those who say that connection has been disproved and that growing skepticism in this country and even more in Europe cannot simply be dismissed by your resolve to stay the course, as you say?

The President. My point was, about September the 11th, is that America was attacked, and now we're at war in a global war on terror. That's the connection with September the 11th. Some in Europe, I recognize, view September the 11th as a terrible moment. We view it as not only a terrible moment but a clear indication that we're at war with an ideology, people that are willing to use terror to spread their ideology. So my speech, if you look carefully at how it was written—I'm confident you did, Klaus—shows that I was making the connection between the attack and the global war on terror that we now face—and the ideology of those who attacked us is very similar to those that have now gone into Iraq to try to stop the progress—and make clear, our strategy is to find the terrorists, bring them to justice before they harm us here, as well as defeat the ideology of hate with an ideology of hope, and that's democracy. Our strategy in Iraq is to promote a stable democracy, in other words, encourage political progress and, at the same time, train up the Iraqis so they can do the fighting.

And I look forward to sharing my thoughts about the progress we are making with your Prime Minister. They've been—Denmark has been a steadfast ally, and I know he has obviously stood strong in the face of political pressures, made a decision based upon what he thought was right for the world, spreading peace.

I strongly believe that we're laying the foundation for peace for generations to come. I reject the notion that certain countries cannot be democratic. I view that elitist—I view that as condemning people to hopelessness. Our policy up to now, prior to September the 11th, was, "Why don't we just kind of tolerate tyranny and hope for the best." It doesn't work that way, and we learned a strong lesson.

The speech, I think you'll see, was that the attack indicated we're at war, and Iraq is part of that war. Otherwise, why would people be pouring into the country trying to defeat us? Why? Because they fear democracy. They fear the competing ideology that is a hopeful ideology.

Joe.

U.S. Aid to Africa

Q. Mr. President, a question about your malaria program.

The President. Sure.

Q. By the time we get back to the office, there will probably be a statement from some group praising your proposal but saying once again,"Why didn't the President go through the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis, and Malaria?" Why do a separate program?

The President. Well, first of all, we are supporting the Global Fund. But like our AIDS Initiative, we also feel it is an effective way to achieve results. See, you just asked a process question. You're assuming somebody is going to—let's focus on the process. What I want the world to do is focus on how best to get the job done, how best to achieve the objective.

And so our strategy has been two-fold: one, support the Global Fund; but on the other hand, target specific countries. And if you noticed, I said in there, this will—we're taking the lead. We want people to follow. We want people in other countries to follow—we want people to follow. And the United States Government is going to take the lead. The Gates Foundation is taking the lead, and I call upon other governments, other foundations, to do the same. So our strategy is one of results, how best to achieve the objective.

Give me your name again.

Q. Olivier. You can call me Mr. Knox. That's fine. [*Laughter*]

The President. Pretty good. Pretty good retort. [*Laughter*] Very good. Olivier.

Iran

Q. Thank you, sir. Sir, were you surprised when you heard the allegations that the President-elect of Iran might have been

one of the people who took Americans hostage in Tehran? And do you have any information that would confirm or refute those charges?

The President. I have no information, but obviously, this is—his involvement raises many questions, and knowing how active people are at finding answers to questions, I'm confident they'll be found. And I spoke to Prime Minister Blair this morning, spoke to Chancellor Schroeder the other day. I look forward to speaking to Jacques Chirac when we get to Scotland.

My message is, is that it's very important at this moment for the EU–3 to send a strong message to the new person there that the world is united in saying that you should not be given the capabilities of enriching uranium, which could then be converted into a nuclear weapon. In other words, we've got a new man who has assumed power, and he must hear a focused message. I was pleased with Gerhard Schroeder's statement here, and Prime Minister Blair can speak for himself. But let me just say, I believe the EU–3's message is going to be a very strong message, and that's where our message is—that's where my attention is focused right now.

In order to achieve a diplomatic objective, it's very important to have clear goals. And we have a clear goal, and that is to say to the Iranians—well, there's a clear understanding that Iran should not have a nuclear weapon. It would be a very destabilizing, dangerous situation. And the world is speaking in one voice, and so the message now to the new leader is a very strong message.

Charlie.

Trade With Africa

Q. With regard to trade, African leaders have been pretty loud in pointing out that subsidies and tariffs are a tremendous handicap to the development of trade. Europe, in particular, has been hostile to really lifting tariffs and subsidies. Any chance of any movement on that, within the context of the G–8?

The President. Well, I appreciate you bringing that up. The African Growth and Opportunity Act, signed by my predecessor and extended by the Congress in my administration, is working. I want to remind people that ultimately it's commerce, trade, economic growth that will overwhelm the need for aid itself. And exports from sub-Sahara Africa to the United States are up 88 percent because we've opened up our markets.

The best approach to dealing with Europe—and our own subsidies for that matter—on agricultural matters, is to go to the Doha round of the WTO and jointly declare that we're going to get rid of all agricultural subsidies. That has been our proposal.

The other thing is, it's very important for African nations themselves to eliminate the barriers of trade intracontinent, between themselves. There are, if you look—at least there was the last time I looked—there were some impediments to trade amongst the African nations. And so the—we've all got responsibilities to make trade freer.

I said in my speech today that it's—the World Bank estimated that a successful Doha round—in other words, a new trading regime that enabled all countries to trade freely, would lift 140 million people out of poverty, in their estimate. And that's why this Doha round is very important. And so we'll spend time articulating how best to continue moving forward on the Doha round. That's probably the most—the place where you're going to find that would be most effective in being able to deal with the subsidies, whether it be the EU or our own subsidies for that matter.

Klaus.

Guantanamo Bay Detainees

Q. Guantanamo is still a very hot topic for many Europeans. After 3 years, there are still prisoners there who haven't had

their case heard. And the U.N. now are talking about investigating secret U.S. prisons and detainee facilities. Is that a thing—in the investigation, the U.S. would cooperate with? And don't you have fears that this is going to harm the U.S. image a lot if this situation goes on for years?

The President. Well, I think—I think if the truth is not told, it's a problem. But let's talk about the truth, in terms of Guantanamo. First of all, there's inspections 24 hours a day, 7 days a week available for the International Red Cross. There's been a lot of press contingents down to take a look at the situation firsthand and a lot of congressional folks going down. In other words, a lot of people—there's a transparent situation there.

I think we probably had about 800 or so people detained there, and remember, Klaus, I made a decision as to what to do with people swept off of a battlefield who didn't wear uniforms. I mean, this is a different kind of war. I made the decision they would be treated humanely, just like the Geneva Accords insist, and they have been.

Of the 800 detained, some 200 or so have been sent back to their countries. In other words, we screened and analyzed and took a look at whether they would be a threat again. I'm in a dilemma—at one point during this process, because people were let back out on the—sent back to a country, and they ended up killing an American. What do I tell the loved one? In other words, these people were fighting. They were fighters. They were on the battlefield.

Secondly, I agree with you. We need to make sure there is a way forward. And that's why I set up military commissions. But the military—and by the way, in a military commission, people would have lawyers; they would have—there would be procedures, court procedures. Unfortunately—or fortunately, I shouldn't—let me take that back—what has happened has been that our court system is analyzing, making a judicial decision as to whether or not the military—these people should be tried in a military commission or in a civilian court, and we're awaiting a verdict on that. And once that happens, then there will be a way forward.

Joe.

Debt Relief/Development Grants

Q. Mr. President, a question about debt cancellation.

The President. Yes.

Q. The G–8 finance ministers came up with a figure of 18 countries. Shortly after that, a number of African Presidents meeting in Nigeria said, "It's a good start. We'd like more." Is that 18 figure carved in stone, or is there——

The President. Not at all, Joe. There's a—it's a criterion-based agreement, and that other countries will be able to qualify for debt forgiveness as well. So there's a way forward for the other countries that they expressed concerns about.

The other thing is, is that I would hope people would take notice of the initiative that I proposed a couple of years ago, and that is the World Bank, in its desire to help developing nations, give grants as opposed to loans. And we're making progress toward that goal. Jim Wolfensohn did a fine job of making progress toward that goal, and Paul Wolfowitz will continue toward that goal.

But the idea is that we're relieving the pressure on the balance sheet. But governments have got to make good choices. They've got to be willing to invest and fight corruption, kind of like the criterion in our Millennium Challenge Account, which is a very important initiative. It's one I called on Congress to fund. Congress has been reluctant to fully fund our request because we haven't got the money out the door fast enough. And so my message today was, like it has been the last couple of times I've talked about Millennium Challenge Account, we'll do a better job of processing and moving along.

Olivier.

Q. Thank you, sir.

The President. One more round after this, so everybody be preparing your questions.

Sudan

Q. On Darfur, sir, the Deputy Secretary of State told the House Foreign Relations Committee this week or last that the United States and Europe shouldn't send troops to Darfur because they would come up against bloodthirsty, coldblooded killers. Does this mean that the bloodthirsty, coldblooded killers can set the agenda in Darfur? And what do you say to some critics who say that your administration is easing off Sudan because of good counterterrorism intelligence cooperation?

The President. That's a preposterous claim. It's not even close to the truth. First, my administration, with Jack Danforth and Colin Powell's good work, helped solve the north-south civil war. And now we're working close—working with parties to get that peace agreement implemented.

Secondly, the strategy, an effective strategy, is to work with the AU—African Union—and use AU forces to help keep the warring parties apart while we continue to press the Sudanese Government as well as rebel groups for a comprehensive settlement. And the United States has helped—worked with NATO and the EU to provide logistical support for the movement of 7,700 troops into Darfur.

Today I announced it will help build 16 additional base camps; it will provide maintenance services, as well as C–130 to help remove Rwandan troops. We spend a lot of time on this important issue. Ours is a nation that called this a genocide. And we take this situation in Darfur very seriously—and, by the way, lead in terms of aid and working with other nations. Canada, by the way, has come up with a big tranche of aid the other day, for which we're grateful.

Charlie.

Zimbabwe

Q. What are you telling or asking Thabo Mbeki now, as Robert Mugabe intensifies his crackdown against his opposition in Zimbabwe?

The President. As you know, Thabo Mbeki was here. You might remember, I did go to South Africa as well. And my message has been very consistent: "You're a great democracy. You're showing the world what is possible after the terrible period of apartheid. In other words, you showed how to reconcile differences, and you're a very strong nation on the continent of Africa. And next door to you is a person that is destroying a country because of bad policy, and it's not right. And the nations in the neighborhood must be strong."

I was asked yesterday, are we willing to tie some of our aid to the position that nations take on Zimbabwe? I said no because I don't want people to suffer as a result of—more people to suffer as a result of Zimbabwe. In other words, our aid is focused at people.

And on the other hand, working with nations and providing help and aid and trade and, you know, partnering does give us a chance to lend our voice to others who are saying, "This has got to change in Zimbabwe." He is a terrible example.

Q. Are you disappointed in Mbeki?

The President. I'm disappointed in Mugabe. He is—Zimbabwe was a bread basket, provided a lot of food on a continent that often needs food, and it's a country being wrecked. And I am—the world needs to speak very clearly about the decisions he has made and the consequence of the decisions he has made.

Klaus.

President's Upcoming Visit to Denmark

Q. You have already expressed your admiration for the Danish Prime Minister, but I wondered if there were other good reasons behind your decision to take the detour to our tiny country like Denmark

and even ruining part of your birthday by doing that? [*Laughter*]

The President. No, no, it's enhancing it—it's enhancing it. Listen, Denmark has been a great friend of the United States for years. And I hope my visit sends a statement to the Danish people: Thank you for the friendship. I don't expect everybody to agree with the decisions my administration has made——

Q. You know there will be demonstrations in Denmark?

The President. That's fine. Good. That's the great thing about going to a free society, see. One of the things about—a wonderful thing about freedom is, people are able to express their opinions, and I expect people to express their opinions.

On the other hand, I would hope my visit says to the Danish people that America respects you and we share values. And those shared values are important. They're universal values. They're not American values or Danish values. They're universal values, freedom of speech and minority rights, human dignity.

So I'm looking forward to it. Selfishly, I'm looking forward to going to Denmark. I've never been there, and I can't wait to see it. Now, admittedly, I'm not going to take the typical tourist tour. I don't expect you'll find me walking the streets of—you know, in the evening, arm in arm with my wife. On the other hand, I bet I get to see enough of the country to give me a good sense of the beauty of the country. I'm really looking forward to it.

Q. Do you plan to bring all your family members and your wife?

The President. I'm bringing wife, for certain, and a family member. All my family members? It's a lot. [*Laughter*] If you're talking about my daughters, one of my daughters will be accompanying me. Thank you for asking.

Joe.

Group of Eight/Africa

Q. Mr. President, David Dodge, the Governor of Canada's Central Bank, questions the whole G–8 process, saying it really shouldn't be focusing on Africa and climate change but rather global prosperity and economic imbalances. And he says that a new mechanism, a new institution is needed that includes China, India, and South Africa. What do you think about that?

The President. You know, the G–8 conferences used to be focused strictly on global—you know, economic—our respective economies, and it's an economic discussion. And it's an interesting growth out of just talking about economics to just understanding that together we can make a difference by helping developing nations grow their economies as well. It's really what you're talking about.

The ultimate success on the continent of Africa is going to be whether or not strong economies develop, being able to give people a chance to succeed. And many of the initiatives we're focused on will lay the conditions for economic growth. And you can't grow if you're at war. That's why I talked about the peacekeeping initiatives. You can't grow if you've got a huge part of the future of your nation being wiped out because of HIV/AIDS. It's very difficult to grow if you don't educate your women, and that's why I announced a very strong initiative for the education of girls on the continent of Africa. These are projects—it's hard to grow when you've got a million people dying of malaria because of the inability to treat a mosquito bite.

I mean, there's something very practical about dealing with—dealing with, on the continent of Africa, the nations, helping nations, partnering nations. And I think it speaks to the admonition that "To whom much is given, much is required." And so I find this an important part of an agenda.

It shouldn't be the only agenda. We're definitely talking about the environment, definitely talking about Africa. But we'll

also be talking about the Palestinian conflict. There's a chance for G–8 nations, developed nations to help the Palestinians. We'll be talking about our economies. There's always a nice discussion about currency, for example—an interesting part of the dialog. And I find it interesting to talk with other nations about what they are doing to stimulate their economies.

I suspect this G–8—in other words, there will be very—current events will be discussed one way or the other. Iraq, of course, will be discussed. But obviously, one of the interesting parts of this G–8 that folks will be looking at will be the recent issues within the EU. And my message there will be the same as it was here when Jose Barroso and others came, Juncker came, and I said, "Look, we want Europe to succeed. We want there to be a Europe that is whole, free, and at peace. And we want Europe to be successful in its enterprise, and we want it to be growing." I mean, after all, we've got enormous trade with Europe, and trade is an important part of raising standards of living. If that's the case, you want your trading partner to be healthy. And so we'll be discussing—I'm confident there will be some discussions about what has taken place.

I'm looking forward to it. In other words, a broad agenda makes sense to me.

G–8 Membership/Kyoto Protocol

Q. But just a quick follow up——

The President. Yes.

Q. What about including India and China and South Africa?

The President. Well, no, India and China and South Africa will be there. Absolutely. There will be some African nations there. There will be India, China, Brazil, and Mexico—I can't remember all the nations—but yes, there will be a forum or a discussion including those countries.

I'm particularly interested in discussing energy with China. One of the—we had a problem with Kyoto because Kyoto would have—we didn't think the way forward to really achieve an objective we wanted because, first of all, Kyoto would really have hurt our economy a lot. Kyoto didn't include countries like India and China. And now is the chance to work with developed nations and developing nations to develop a way to share technologies, for example, that will enable us to achieve the objective we want.

And the United States recognizes there's warming, and that some of that is caused by manmade emissions. But we also recognize that we're dependent upon foreign sources of oil. We want to diversify away from fossil fuels, and we want to help developing nations do the same. And so we have a great opportunity, because of the presence of these nations at this moment to discuss how to go forward. And so, he's right. They should be included, and they are.

Final question, Olivier.

First Lady's Upcoming Visit to Africa

Q. Thank you, sir. Sir, you're coming back stag from Europe——

The President. Coming back?

Q. Stag. Your wife is going on to Africa.

The President. That's an accurate statement.

Q. We understand from African sources that she's going to South Africa, Tanzania, and——

The President. Interesting way to put it. You could have said, "You're coming back alone from Europe," or "You're coming back *sans*"——

Q. Oooh! [*Laughter*]

The President. But you say, "You're coming back stag."

Q. If I'd known, I would have gone with the *sans*. [*Laughter*] You beat me to it, sir. [*Laughter*]

Communications Director Dan Bartlett. Where's Gregory [David Gregory, NBC News] when you need him? [*Laughter*]

The President. That's right. [*Laughter*] Classic moment, wasn't it?

Q. Absolutely.

The President. Were you there for that?

Q. I was not, but I——

The President. We're laughing about the fact that one of their comrades, a very important person in the White House pool went over to Paris, France, and fired off a series of questions to Jacques Chirac in French.

Q. My mother e-mailed the corrected French. [*Laughter*]

The President. That's good. [*Laughter*] I corrected his French too—[*laughter*]—and didn't even know what he was saying. [*Laughter*] This is all off the record, because this will hurt Gregory's feelings. Please. Holland [Steve Holland, Reuters], you're copiously taking notes. [*Laughter*]

Q. It's going right to him. [*Laughter*]

The President. Good. [*Laughter*]

Communications Director Bartlett. He just had twins.

The President. He had twins?

Communications Director Bartlett. Yes, last week.

The President. Fantastic. Gender?

Communications Director Bartlett. A boy and a girl.

The President. Weight? Health?

Q. Good. Good.

The President. Mother?

Communications Director Bartlett. Strong. They're in the fives. I think both of them are 5 pounds.

The President. That's good, 5. How big were yours?

Communications Director Bartlett. Same, midsize.

The President. We're back—where were you?

Q. Well, we heard that your wife is going——

The President. I'm flying alone, yes. [*Laughter*]

Q. You're flying alone, *sans* First Lady. She's going to South Africa, Tanzania, Rwanda. My question to you is, what message is she bringing from the United States, and what can she get across that a diplomat or a rock star could not?

The President. Her message is: One, the United States is committed to Africa, and we've got a good record; secondly, that our commitment to Africa is aimed at helping people. She'll be talking about educating young girls, and she'll be talking about our HIV/AIDS initiative. Her presence shows commitment. This is the second time she's been to Africa since I've been sworn in as President. Plus, she's a darn good diplomat. She speaks clearly, and she is a—she's a compassionate soul when she speaks, which is—she's a genuinely compassionate person. And people will see her compassion. And there will be no problem with her getting any news coverage, so, in other words, she'll be seen, which makes her an effective representative.

And part of people knowing that the United States cares is for the messenger to have a platform. And so she'll have a—she'll have the ability to talk from her heart about the specific initiatives that we're very much involved in.

All right, listen, thank you all. Looking forward to it. Klaus, see you over there? Are you going to be there?

Q. I leave that to my colleagues.

The President. You're going to lateral me. You're going to transfer me off. [*Laughter*] Well, I'm sure they're going to be as professional as you were.

Q. I hope so.

The President. Nice to see you again. Thank you. Appreciate you.

NOTE: The interview began at 10:48 a.m. in the Roosevelt Room at the White House. In his remarks, the President referred to James D. Wolfensohn, Quartet Special Envoy for Gaza Disengagement; Prime Minister Anders Fogh Rasmussen and Queen Margrethe II of Denmark; President-elect Mahmud Ahmadi-nejad of Iran; Prime Minister Tony Blair of the United Kingdom; Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder of Germany; President Jacques Chirac of France; Paul D. Wolfowitz, President, International Bank for Reconstruction and Development; President

Thabo Mbeki of South Africa; President Robert Mugabe of Zimbabwe; European Commission President Jose Manuel Durao Barroso; and European Council President Jean-Claude Junker. A reporter referred to Deputy Secretary of State Robert B. Zoellick. Journalists participating in the interview were Charles Cobb of AllAfrica.com; Klaus Justsen of Jyllands-Posten; Joseph DeCapua of Voice of America; and Olivier Knox of Agence France Press. The transcript was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on July 3. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this interview.

Remarks at an Independence Day Celebration in Morgantown, West Virginia
July 4, 2005

The President. Thank you all. Happy Fourth of July. Thanks for coming. I am honored to celebrate Independence Day in Morgantown, West Virginia. I appreciate you all being here. The history of this land dates back to the earliest days of our Republic. Turns out George Washington used to drop by this part of the State. And I appreciate a warm welcome for another George W.

Coming to West Virginia is becoming a Fourth of July tradition for me. And every time I come here, I appreciate the beauty of West Virginia, and I appreciate being with decent, hard-working, patriotic Americans who call the Mountain State home.

Today we gather to celebrate the 229th anniversary of America's independence. Across our great land, families will gather to fly the flag, to watch the fireworks, and count our blessings as Americans. We are grateful for the bounty and opportunity of our land. We are grateful for our liberty, and we are grateful for the men and women in uniform who keep our country safe. [*Applause*] Thank you all.

I bring greetings from First Lady Laura Bush. She said, "You go over to West Virginia and tell them how much we love them."

Audience member. We love her!

The President. I love her too. [*Laughter*]

I appreciate Congresswoman Shelley Moore Capito. I appreciate her service. I appreciate her love for the great State of West Virginia. Thank you, Shelley Moore. I want to thank the mayor of Morgantown, West Virginia, Ron Justice, for serving the people. Mr. Mayor, thanks for coming out today. I want to thank all the local and State officials who are here. I want to thank David Hardesty, the president of West Virginia University. I appreciate you. I appreciate being on this fine campus, and I appreciate the good work that the folks do here to educate the people of West Virginia.

The history we celebrate today is a testament to the power of freedom to lift up a whole nation. On Independence Day, we remember the ideals of liberty that led men from 13 Colonies to gather in Philadelphia and pen a declaration of self-truths. And we remember the band of patriots who risked their lives to bring freedom to a new continent.

On July 4, 1776, more than 5 years of the Revolutionary War still lay ahead. From the Battle of New York to the winter at Valley Forge to the victory at Yorktown, our forefathers faced terrible losses and hardships. Yet, they kept their resolve. They kept their faith in a future of liberty, and with their hard-won victory, we guaranteed a home for the Declaration's proposition that all are created equal.

Through the centuries, the Declaration of Independence has remained a revolutionary document. As President Kennedy said on the Fourth of July, 1962, "The Declaration unleashed not merely a revolution against the British but a revolution in human affairs."

The revolutionary truths of the Declaration are still at the heart of America: We believe in the dignity and rights of every person. We believe in freedom and equal justice, the rule of law, and a Government of the people, by the people, and for the people. Through the centuries, this creed of freedom and equality has lifted the fortunes of all Americans. And we know that this great ideal of human freedom is entrusted to us in a special way and that the ideal of liberty is worth defending.

Defending the ideals of our founding has required the service and sacrifice of every generation, and the men and women of our Armed Forces have always answered our Nation's call. With their courage, they have crossed oceans, defeated murderous ideologies, and liberated the oppressed. And today on this Fourth of July, our grateful Nation thanks our 25 million veterans for their service to our country.

At this hour, our men and women in uniform are defending America against the threats of the 21st century. The war we are fighting came to our shores on September the 11th, 2001. After that day, I made a pledge to the American people: We will not wait to be attacked again. We will bring our enemies to justice or bring justice to our enemies.

Our enemies in this new war are men who celebrate murder, incite suicide, and thirst for absolute power. They seek to spread their ideology of tyranny and oppression across the world. They seek to turn the Middle East into a haven for terror. They seek to drive America out of the region. These terrorists will not be stopped by negotiations or concessions or appeals to reason. In this war, there is only one option, and that is victory.

We are pursuing a comprehensive strategy to win the war on terror. We're taking the fight to the terrorists abroad so we do not have to face them here at home. We're denying our enemies sanctuary and making it clear that America will not tolerate regimes that harbor or support terrorists. And we're spreading freedom, because the terrorists know there is no room for them in a free and democratic Middle East. By advancing the cause of liberty in a troubled part of the world, we will remove a source of instability and violence, and we will lay the foundation of peace for our children and our grandchildren.

Iraq is the latest battlefield in the war on terror. Our work there is difficult and dangerous because terrorists from across the region are converging on Iraq to fight the rise of democracy. The images of cruelty and suffering we see on television are real, and they are difficult for our compassionate Nation to watch. Yet, the terrorist violence has not brought them any closer to achieving their strategic objectives. The terrorists tried to intimidate the Iraqi Governing Council, and they failed. They tried to delay the transfer of sovereignty to Iraq, and they failed. They tried to stop the free Iraqi elections, and they failed. They continue to kill in the hope that they will break the resolve of the American people, but they will fail.

The lesson of this experience is clear. The terrorists can kill the innocent, but they cannot stop the advance of freedom. This January, the world watched as the Iraqi people defied intimidation, dipped their fingers in ink, and cast their votes in the country's first free and democratic election in decades. And last week, on June the 28th, the free nation of Iraq marked the first anniversary of the day when sovereignty was restored to its rightful owners, the Iraqi people.

By helping Iraqis build a free and democratic nation, we will give strength to an ally in the war on terror, and we'll make America more secure. To continue building

a free and democratic Iraq, Americans and Iraqis are fighting side by side to stop the terrorists and insurgents. And our military is helping to train Iraqi forces so they can defend their own liberty. Our strategy can be summed up this way: As Iraqis stand up, we will stand down, and then our troops can come home to a proud and grateful nation.

West Virginians are serving with skill and honor in the war on terror. Some deployed from Camp Dawson right down the road. Soldiers from the 201st Field Artillery Unit of the West Virginia National Guard carried out vital missions in Iraq. Those soldiers are contributing to the proud history of their unit. The 201st has been defending our freedom since the Revolutionary War.

One of the battery commanders from the 201st is Captain Jeff Setser. Captain Setser is a police officer in Charleston. He served a year in Iraq, and he was in Baghdad during the Iraqi elections. He and his fellow West Virginia guardsmen escorted convoys and protected supplies and patrolled cities. Here is what he said: "We treated people with respect, and they respected us. You could see that they were starting to walk on their own instead of leaning on us. The progress is just amazing."

Guardsmen and reservists are helping Iraq build in other ways. First Lieutenant James McCormick, who is with us today, he's from Scott Depot, West Virginia. He served a 13-month tour in Iraq as part of the 518th Combat Gun Truck Company. His unit provided security for military convoys transporting troops and supplies. For his bravery, Lieutenant McCormick earned the Bronze Star and two Purple Hearts.

He wrote me a letter last week. Here's what he said: "If needed, all of us would return and continue the mission. It's a just and much needed fight. Please know that many of us still live by the code of honor that so many soldiers before us had, from Bunker Hill to Baghdad."

First Lieutenant McCormick is right. The men and women of America's Armed Forces are bringing great honor to the uniform they wear and to the Nation they serve. And in this time of testing, our troops, whether they be stationed here or abroad, can know that the American people stand behind them all the way.

I thank all the military families who are with us today. Times of war are times of great sacrifice, and the burden falls especially hard on the families. You're playing a vital role at a crucial time in our Nation's history. All Americans are inspired by the strength and the sacrifice of our military families.

Some of America's finest men and women have given their lives in the war on terror, and we remember them on Independence Day. We pray for the families who have lost a loved one in freedom's cause. And we know that the best way to honor their sacrifice is to complete the mission, so we will stay until the fight is won.

On this Fourth of July and in the days ahead, I ask every American to find a way to thank the men and women defending our freedom. There's so many ways to do so. You can fly the flag or send a letter to the troops in the field or help a military family down the street. The Department of Defense has set up a web site, americasupportsyou.mil. You can go there to learn about efforts in your own community. And by the way, it's not too late to find something to do today. At this time, when we celebrate our freedom, our troops have got to understand that the American people support them all the way.

And on Independence Day, we remember that we also have essential responsibilities here at home, the unfinished work of American freedom. In a world moving toward liberty, we are determined to show the meaning and the promise of liberty. The greatest strength of America is the heart and soul of the American people. Every time a volunteer reaches out to a neighbor in need, our Nation grows stronger and more hopeful.

Today when I landed at the airport, I met Chuck White. He's a volunteer with the local United Way. For those of you who are serving as a member of the army of compassion in America, thank you for loving your neighbor just like you'd like to be loved yourselves. By taking time out of your lives to help somebody else, you're helping to ensure that every American can share the blessings of liberty.

As we celebrate the Fourth of July, we rededicate ourselves to the ideals that inspired our Founders. During that hot summer in Philadelphia more than 200 years ago, from our desperate fight for independence to the darkest days of a civil war to the hard-fought battles of the 20th century, there were many chances to lose our heart, our nerve, or our way. But Americans have always held firm, because we have always believed in certain truths: We know that the freedom we defend is meant for all men and women and for all times. And we know that when the work is hard, the proper response is not retreat. It is courage.

We got a great future for our country. From the mountains of West Virginia to the Great Plains to our Pacific shores, the truths of the Declaration still guide America and remain the best hope of mankind. I believe that this century will be "liberty century." In 1770—and I know that by carrying the spirit of 1776 into this new age, we will leave a stronger and better country for all who call this great land home.

It is a great honor to be the President of such a great nation. And it's my honor to be here to wish you all a happy Fourth of July. May God bless you, and may God continue to bless our country.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:57 a.m. at West Virginia University.

Interview With the United Kingdom's ITV
June 29, 2005

Prime Minister Blair/Iraq/G–8

Sir Trevor McDonald. Mr. President, the G–8 summit will be chaired by Tony Blair. He wants to get new international agreements on aid, on trade, and on climate change. Now, he gave you unstinting support over the war in Iraq; can he expect the same support from you over the G–8?

The President. You know, Tony Blair made decisions on what he thought was best for the people of Great Britain, and I made decisions on what I thought was best for Americans. And I really don't view our relationship as one of quid pro quo. I view our relationship as one of strong allies and friends working together for the common good.

Having said that, I bring a strong record of support for countries in Africa. I think people are going to be surprised to learn about all the efforts we've made here in America to clean up our environment and to invest in new technologies. And so I'm confident we'll have a good G–8.

Mr. McDonald. On the question of Tony Blair, his support for you on Iraq probably damaged him politically at home. Supporting his proposals in Edinburgh might be one way of paying him back and making sure that he can probably repair some of that damage.

The President. Well, again, I really don't view our relationship as one of—you know, we both make decisions and try to earn credit with each other on a personal basis. Tony Blair made decisions on what he thought was best for keeping the peace and winning the war on terror, as did I.

So I go to the G–8 not really trying to make him look bad or good, but I go to the G–8 with an agenda that I think is best for our country. And I believe this: I believe that we have a duty and an obligation to help folks who suffer on the continent of Africa and have done so—we've tripled the aid to Africa. We've got a significant role in helping to defeat HIV/AIDS, a $15 billion program over 5 years. And there is more we're going to do, and I look forward to working with Tony and the other leaders to help the African countries succeed.

I will say something about African countries—they're not going to succeed, however, if they don't make good choices—good governance choices and investment in their people.

Mr. McDonald. If I may, Mr. President, we will come back to the question of African aid.

The President. Okay, sorry.

Climate Change/Kyoto Protocol

Mr. McDonald. But can I start with the subject of climate change, which is one of the subjects on the G–8 agenda?

The President. Sure.

Mr. McDonald. Now, the majority of the world's leading scientists now agree that climate change is a reality. Do you agree with their conclusion?

The President. I believe it is a significant, long-term issue that we've got to deal with. And that's why my Government is dealing with it. We spent I think over $20 billion since I've been the President to not only research the issue of greenhouse gases but to develop technologies that will enable us to diversify away from fossil fuels. And I look forward to discussing this agenda with not only the G–8 leaders but also with the leaders of developing countries, countries like India and China.

Mr. McDonald. Do you accept that climate change is manmade, sir?

The President. To a certain extent it is, obviously. I mean, if fossil fuels create greenhouse gases, we're burning fossil fuel, as is a lot of other countries. You know, look, there was a debate over Kyoto, and I made the decision, as did a lot of other people in this country, by the way, that the Kyoto treaty didn't suit our needs. In other words, the Kyoto treaty would have wrecked our economy, if I can be blunt.

And so my hope is—and I think the hope of Tony Blair is—to move beyond the Kyoto debate and to collaborate on new technologies that will enable the United States and other countries to diversify away from fossil fuels so that the air will be cleaner and that we have the economic and national security that comes from less dependence on foreign sources of oil. For that end, for example, we're investing in—or to that end, we're investing in a lot of hydrogen—research on hydrogen-powered automobiles. I believe we'll be able to burn coal without emitting any greenhouse gases, zero emissions plant.

And so therefore, we've got to spend money and share technology as to how to move forward.

Mr. McDonald. But Mr. President, if I may, the predictions about global warming—and I hear what you say—are very dire. The UK's chief scientist says that it probably poses a bigger threat than global terrorism. Isn't it, therefore, irresponsible for you to say, as you've done, that you walked away from Kyoto and you won't order cuts in carbon dioxide emissions because it would damage America's economy?

The President. I walked away from Kyoto because it would damage America's economy, you bet. It would have destroyed our economy. It was a lousy deal for the American economy. I felt there was a better way. And that's why——

Mr. McDonald. But is that putting American industrial, economic interests above the global interests of the environment?

The President. No, I think you can do both. See, I think you can grow your economy and at the same time do a better job of harnessing greenhouse gases. That's

exactly what I intend to talk to our partners about. I don't think you can expect any American leader to wreck the economy, nor as an ally and a friend of America and a trading partner of America should you want us to wreck our economy.

On the other hand, what you would want us to do is to use our investment capacity as well as our research capacity to come up with new ways to power our economy, new ways to energize our economy. And that's precisely what we're doing, and I look forward to sharing those ideas.

Secondly, the Kyoto treaty wouldn't work unless all nations were involved. And as you know, many of the developing nations weren't involved in Kyoto. So some of the discussions we're going to have at the G–8, thanks to Tony Blair's leadership, is to work with India and China as to how to share technology with them, so that we can all work together to clean up the environment and at the same time have sustained economic growth.

Debt Relief/Aid to Africa

Mr. McDonald. You recently helped, Mr. President, to scrap the debt burden on some of Africa's poorest countries, and you've won some praise for that. But shouldn't a country as rich as yours be giving much more in direct aid to these poverty-stricken countries of Africa?

The President. Well, we've tripled the budget on direct aid to the countries in Africa since I've been the President—tripled it. We have got a great trade agreement with the African nations called AGOA, the African Growth and Opportunity Act, and that is working. I just announced a $674 million food relief package. We're spending $15 billion on HIV/AIDS. No, we're leading the world when it comes to helping Africa.

But we've done something else that I think is smart and I think our taxpayers appreciate. And that is that we're saying, "Now for increased aid, you, the leaders of Africa, must have transparency in your Government. You must fight corruption. You must invest in the health and education of your people." In other words, we're not going to invest in governments that are corrupt.

Mr. McDonald. So this is aid with strings attached?

The President. No, this is aid—this is partnership. This is saying to nations, "We want to work with you as partners, partners in alleviating poverty, partners in helping fight HIV/AIDS. But you've got a role to play. You, the leaders of African nations, you've got a role to play to make good governance decisions." That's what the taxpayers of my country expect, and I hope that's what the taxpayers of Great Britain expect—is expect us to, when we make investments in countries—that they work. And they don't work if a nation doesn't invest in its people.

Mr. McDonald. I hear what you say about tripling the aid to Africa, but it's still only—it's less than naught.2 percent of gross domestic national product. And that is less than what the United Nations talks about of having naught.7 percent. Some European countries are moving towards that. Why can't America?

The President. You know, there's all kinds of ways to calculate how generous we are. Let me just tell you this: If you take all the food aid, America is by far the most generous country. If you take the direct aid, we're very generous. But when you add on our private contributions—see, our tax system encourages private citizens to donate to organizations that, for example, help the folks in Africa. And when you take the combined effort of U.S. taxpayers' money plus U.S. citizens' donations, we're very generous. And we'll do more. And I look forward to talking about doing more at the G–8. But I've got to tell you, I'm very proud of the generosity of the United States.

Mr. McDonald. But what about that kind of aid which is linked to the buying of American goods and services? You say you

give aid on the condition that people buy American goods and services. That's not very generous, is it?

The President. I'm not exactly sure what you're talking about there. What I'm talking about is our Millennium Challenge Account that says, "We want to help you, but you've got to have good governance. You've got to fight corruption." Why does it make sense, for me as the person who's supposed to be the wise guardian of the taxpayers' money, to send money to a country and know the Government is going to steal it? That doesn't make any sense.

What does make sense is for our generous Nation to help countries that make good choices about how they govern, about transparency, but also good choices about investing in the health and education of their people. We're more than willing to help, and we're leading the world when it comes to help. And I wouldn't call it conditions-based, what I call it is——

Mr. McDonald. What about a country like——

The President. ——partnering, working together.

Uzbekistan

Mr. McDonald. But what about a country like Uzbekistan, Mr. President, with a shocking, appalling record of human rights, getting tens of billions of dollars of American aid because you have American bases there?

The President. Again, I'm not exactly sure of the numbers you're throwing out there, but no question we have an American base there. They've been very helpful in helping fight the war on terror.

On the other hand, we are sending very clear messages that we expect minority rights to be honored, that people ought to be allowed to express themselves in the public square without fear of reprisal from the Government.

Agricultural Subsidies

Mr. McDonald. Mr. President, on the question of trade, how can it be morally justified for the world's richest country to subsidize its farmers so that they can sell their goods cheaper than farmers in the Third World and, as a result, put those farmers in the Third World out of business?

The President. That's precisely the question we've been talking to the EU about. There are tremendous agricultural subsidies in the EU. We——

Mr. McDonald. Yes, but—I put those questions to the EU if I were talking to somebody in the EU, but——

The President. No, let me—let me finish. Let me finish. I was about to say, we've got agricultural subsidies, not nearly to the extent that our friends in the EU have, and therefore, we went to Doha round, WTO—Doha round of the WTO and said, "Let's get rid of all our subsidies together. Let's join hands as wealthy industrialized nations and say to the world, we're going to get rid of all our agricultural subsidies together." And so the position of the U.S. Government is, we're willing to do so, and we will do so with the—with our fine friends in the European Union.

Mr. McDonald. So, you would if they would, because at the moment, for example——

The President. Absolutely.

Mr. McDonald. ——cotton farmers in this country get subsidized to the extent of 230 American dollars per cotton acre. You would get rid of those things if the EU does?

The President. Absolutely. And I think we have an obligation to work together to do that. And that's why it's very important that the Doha round of the WTO go forward.

Mr. McDonald. Because if we do achieve this business of free trade, and if markets in the West are opened up to countries in Africa, say, they could be so successful,

then, that they could eliminate the need for aid.

The President. Absolutely. That's the whole reason why we've got the African Growth and Opportunity Act. As a matter of fact, the benefits that have come from opening up markets—our markets to them and their markets to us—far outweigh the benefits of aid.

Iraq/War on Terror

Mr. McDonald. Mr. President, if I can move on to the question of Iraq, when we last spoke before the Iraq war, I asked you about Saddam Hussein and you said this, and I quote: "He harbors and develops weapons of mass destruction, make no mistake about it."

Well, today, no WMD, the war has cost 1,700 American lives, many more Iraqi civilians killed, hundreds of billions of dollars in cost to your country. Can you understand why some people in your country are now beginning to wonder whether it was really worth it?

The President. Absolutely. I mean, when you turn on your TV set every day and see this incredible violence and the havoc that is wreaked as a result of these killers, I'm sure why people are getting discouraged. And that's why I spoke to the Nation last night and reminded people that this is a—Iraq is a part of this global war on terror. And the reason why foreign fighters are flocking into Iraq is because they want to drive us out of the region.

See, these folks represent an ideology that is based upon hate and kind of a narrow vision of mankind—women don't have rights. And I believe this is an ideological movement. And I know that they want to use suicide bombers and assassinations and attacks on the World Trade Center and the attacks in Madrid to try to shake our will and to achieve an objective, which is to topple governments. And the best way to defeat an ideology is with a better ideology. And I believe democracy is a better ideology, to provide hope for people and—but yes, it's tough. But we've done tough things before in America, and we've got a great ally in Great Britain. But it's not only Great Britain. As Gerhard Schroeder said in the Oval Office, a democratic Iraq is important not only to Germany but to Europe, and he's right.

Mr. McDonald. You talk about terrorism in Iraq, but when we spoke before the war, there was no terrorism in Iraq. And you're now making Iraq the frontline of the war on terrorism. But the terrorists have only recently arrived there, arrived since the war on Iraq.

The President. No, I beg your pardon. Zarqawi, Mr. Zarqawi, who is leading the terrorist effort in Iraq now, was in Iraq prior to our discussion.

Mr. McDonald. No Al Qaida in Iraq before the war, Mr. President.

The President. No, Zarqawi, Mr. Zarqawi was, absolutely. He was.

Mr. McDonald. So you've justified in making Iraq the frontline now in the war on terror?

The President. No, I haven't justified that. I'm just giving you a fact, that foreign fighters are traveling into Iraq to make it a frontline in the war on terror. And I would rather defeat them there than face them in our own country.

Mr. McDonald. Have you still—do you still think that you may have mismanaged, or do you think you may have mismanaged public expectations about a quick victory and a decisive ending to this war? You've talked in optimistic terms. But now, as you say, the carnage on the screens night after night seems—tell a different story.

The President. Well, certainly that's a very powerful weapon for the terrorists, is to kill innocent men, women, and children, and try to shake our will and conscience. And on the other hand, there is progress being made in Iraq.

Remember, it wasn't all that long ago that 8 million people went to the polls to vote. And you might remember the discussions prior to the vote. I had a lot of people

saying, "Well, they don't know what they're doing. The people don't want to be free. Certain people can't—they're not going to—what makes you think they want democracy?" And all of a sudden, when given the chance, 8 million people voted, and now the political process is moving in parallel with the security process. And our strategy is to help the Iraqis stand up a viable government, to encourage them to get their constitution written, and to have the elections, to ratify the constitution, as well as a government under the constitution, and, at the same time, train Iraqis so they can fight. That's our strategy, and we're making good progress.

Mr. McDonald. Is the administration at sixes and sevens about the insurgency in Iraq? The Vice President said that we're in the last throes, or seeing the last throes of the insurgency. Donald Rumsfeld comes up and says we could be there for 5, 8, 10, 12 years. Which is it? Which do you believe?

The President. I believe—I believe that we will succeed in Iraq, because, one, the Iraqis want to live in a free society.

Mr. McDonald. But how long will it take, Mr. President?

The President. And two, that the Iraqis want to take the fight to the enemy. And people want me to put a timetable on things. That's a huge mistake. Putting a timetable on this—on our stay there in Iraq simply emboldens the enemy and discourages our friends. And so therefore, my answer is just, quickly as possible, and we are making progress.

Mr. McDonald. Do you ever, in one of those dark souls of the night, do you ever think—do you ever think maybe this was not such a good idea?

The President. No, I'm actually confident it's the right thing to do.

Mr. McDonald. You have never had any doubts at all about it?

The President. I am absolutely confident that we made the right decision. And not only that, I'm absolutely confident that the actions we took in Iraq are influencing reformers and freedom lovers in the greater Middle East. And I believe that you're going to see the rise of democracy in many countries in the broader Middle East, which will lay the foundation for peace.

Climate Change

Mr. McDonald. Mr. President, on the subject of climate change, again, if I can just come back to that——

The President. Okay.

Mr. McDonald. They are expecting—many countries are expecting international legal binding agreements on cutting greenhouse gas emissions. Can they expect your support in doing that?

The President. If this looks like Kyoto, the answer is, no. On the other hand, if people want to come together and share technologies and develop technologies and jointly spend—and spend money on research and development, just like the United States is, to help us diversify away from fossil fuels—more than willing to discuss it.

Mr. McDonald. But they're wasting their time if they think that they'll get from you an international binding agreement about mandatory curbs on greenhouse gases?

The President. I have—I have no idea. Look, you're asking me to design a treaty here with you on the set of the—right here on the set of this—on this beautiful set. I mean, that's kind of—but I'm telling you, if you're trying to get me to say, "We support Kyoto," the answer is, "No. We don't." And it's a bad deal for America.

On the other hand, I look forward to working with nations. Look, we spent over $20 billion on understanding greenhouse gases, understanding climate change, and more importantly, on technologies that will enable us to deal with this. I believe, for example, as a result of some of the research we're doing, we'll have hydrogen-powered automobiles. I know we need more nuclear power in order—nuclear power, after all, is not dependent on fossil fuels and emits

no greenhouse gases. I believe we're going to be able to have coal-fired plants that have zero emissions. We need to work on carbon sequestration technologies. I mean, there's a lot we can do together and achieve the objective which a lot of people want, which is the reduction of greenhouse gases and, at the same time, have viable economic growth.

Mr. McDonald. And because, sir, America remains the biggest polluter.

The President. America is the largest investor in the technologies necessary to be able to say to people, you can grow your economy so people's standard of living can improve, and at the same time be good stewards of the environment.

Mr. McDonald. But pollution in this country has increased amazingly since 1992.

The President. That is a totally inaccurate statement.

Mr. McDonald. It's a U.N. figure.

The President. Well, I just beg to differ with every figure you've got. The environment has—the quality of the environment has improved, in spite of the fact that we've grown our economy.

Mr. McDonald. Mr. President, thank you.

The President. Always a pleasure.

NOTE: The interview was taped at 1:19 p.m. in the Library at the White House for later broadcast. In his remarks, the President referred to Prime Minister Tony Blair of the United Kingdom; former President Saddam Hussein of Iraq; Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder of Germany; senior Al Qaida associate Abu Musab Al Zarqawi. A reporter referred to Chief Scientific Adviser Sir David King of the United Kingdom. The transcript was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on July 5. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this interview.

The President's News Conference With Prime Minister Anders Fogh Rasmussen of Denmark in Kongens Lyngby, Denmark
July 6, 2005

Prime Minister Rasmussen. Good morning, ladies and gentlemen. I am delighted to be here today with my good friend, the President of the United States. Even more so because you chose to visit us, your friends in Denmark, on this very special day, your 59th birthday. So happy birthday, Mr. President.

President Bush. Thank you.

Prime Minister Rasmussen. We have already celebrated the event in a small way with a traditional Danish birthday breakfast, together with our families.

Denmark and the United States have long been close friends and allies. We share the same fundamental goals and values. The close personal ties between the Danes and the Americans are highlighted every year when the biggest Fourth of July celebration outside the United States takes place here in Denmark. Thousands of Danish Americans gather in the Rebild Hills to manifest not just family ties but also shared beliefs. It's our common desire to spread liberty and promote democracy. We do not accept the thesis that certain peoples and nations are not yet ready for democracy and therefore, better suited for dictatorship. We share the belief that freedom is universal, and we share the belief that in the struggle between democracy and dictatorship, you cannot stay neutral.

This is why Denmark contributes with more than 500 troops in Iraq, why we make an active contribution to the joint allied effort in Afghanistan, why we wish to promote democracy and reform in the Middle East, and why we urge all parties to find

a peaceful solution to the Arab-Israeli conflict.

On these and other global challenges, the United States needs the European Union as a strong and active partner. The present internal difficulties must not distract the European Union from its global responsibilities.

Nobody needs a strong and generous Europe more than Africa. As other regions progress, Africa remains haunted by poverty, war, and epidemics. I feel a strong obligation to focus more on Africa, and I'm going to pay an official visit to the region in October. The President and I share the view that the upcoming G–8 summit should focus on how to make poverty history in Africa. I see five main challenges.

Firstly, Africa needs to overcome epidemic diseases. AIDS in Africa is a fully blown disaster. The Copenhagen Consensus meeting last year concluded that combating AIDS should be the world's absolute top priority. It is a fight we must win. During the last 4 years, Denmark has increased funding for the combat of AIDS with more than 60 percent. I urge the G–8 to make a similar extra effort.

Secondly, Africa needs trade. Free trade and better access to the world market provide the means to improve economic growth and fight poverty. When trade advances, poverty retreats. The European Union and the United States have already granted very generous access to their markets for the poorest African countries. We should go further and dismantle trade-distorting agricultural subsidies. I urge the G–8 to do their part in creating a new, balanced, and fair trade regime to benefit Africa.

Thirdly, Africa needs peace. No peace, no progress. Africans, themselves, must prevent conflicts and manage crisis, but we must help them to do this. That is why Denmark has developed a new African program for peace to support the promising endeavors of the African Union. I urge the G–8 to support this program and the peacekeeping efforts of the African Union.

Fourthly, Africa needs more aid—help to self-help. It therefore pleases me greatly that you, President Bush, has just announced your intention to double American assistance to Africa. Denmark is one of the most generous donors, and we're going to focus even more on Africa in the future. In fact, if all G–8 countries matched our effort, Africa would get $90 billion a year, instead of only 25. I therefore urge all G–8 countries to follow our good example.

And finally, Africa needs better governance. All our aid will come to nothing if countries are ruled by corrupt dictators. When aid and trade are linked to good policies, more people are lifted out of poverty. We should generously reward countries that fight corruption, ensure political liberty and economic freedom, invest in health and education of their people, and promote women's rights. And we should not be afraid to stop aid to dictators like Zimbabwe's Mugabe. I urge the G–8 to make no compromise in the demand for good governance.

We must all join efforts to make poverty history. We must fight poverty because human decency requires it, because hope for each individual is essential for human dignity. We must take action so that despair and darkness can be replaced with hope and light for hundreds of millions of people. The ball is in our court. Let us not waste our chances. The G–8 should not miss this golden opportunity.

Mr. President.

President Bush. Thank you, Mr. Prime Minister. Thanks for the birthday breakfast. I would strongly recommend the Danish birthday cake. [*Laughter*] I am really honored to be here in Copenhagen. I appreciate your friendship, and I appreciate the friendship the Danish people have for my country, and vice versa.

Denmark is a close ally and a partner of the United States. Mr. Prime Minister, America values its longstanding relationship

with Denmark, and that's why I've come. I've come to reaffirm my Nation's respect for Denmark and our ties that bind us forever and the fact that we share common values. I've also come because I want to let the people know how much I admire your leadership and your character and your vision.

I appreciate your nation's support in advancing freedom in Eastern Europe and the broader Middle East and around the world. We are grateful for your understanding and the people's understanding that freedom is a universal right and that as we promote freedom and democracy, we'll lay the foundation for peace for generations to come. Under your leadership, Mr. Prime Minister, your commitment has been steadfast and strong in the fight against terror.

You know, for some in Europe, September the 11th was a tragic date, a terrible moment. For me and many in the American public, September the 11th was a change of attitude, a recognition that we're involved with a global war against ideological extremists who will kill the innocent in order to achieve their objectives.

I want to thank you very much for your steadfast support for freedom and peace in Afghanistan and Iraq. I particularly want to thank the loved ones, the family members of the troops stationed abroad for the sake of peace and freedom, for their sacrifice. I know many miss their loved ones, and I know how hard it is for families during times of deployment. And I appreciate them very much. I also want to thank you very much for being such a key contributor to our common security within NATO.

You know, one of the interesting initiatives that we worked together on, and I don't think a lot of people pay attention to, is what's called the Proliferation Security Initiative. It's a group of free nations that have bound together to help interdict the transport of weapons of mass destruction. One of the most harmful aspects of the war on terror could be if these killers were able to gain weapons of mass destruction, which in my mind—no doubt in my mind, they'd use on a moment's notice. And the Proliferation Security Initiative is an attempt by free countries to prevent the spread of weapons of mass destruction. And you've played a leading role.

We've had a great discussion today. We talked about the upcoming G–8 meeting. We talked about Africa and climate change. As well, we talked about Guantanamo. The Prime Minister is concerned about what the situation on Guantanamo says about America and our view of liberty. Let me tell you what I told him. I said, "First, the prisoners are well-treated in Guantanamo. There's total transparency. The International Red Cross can inspect any time, any day. And you're welcome to go." The press, of course, is welcome to go down to Guantanamo.

Secondly, we have sent many home. These people were picked up on the battlefield. They didn't wear uniforms. They weren't associated with a government, but they were on the battlefield. And so we put them in Guantanamo. We wanted to find out as much as we could about what they knew about this war on terror, in order to protect our citizens. Many, it turned out, were sent home.

Thirdly, I assured the Prime Minister there's got to be a way forward for people held in Guantanamo, and there will be. The reason why you haven't seen any adjudication of individuals is because our court system is determining where best to try people, whether it be in a military tribunal where a person would have all—lawyers and rights or whether it be in the civilian courts. And once the judicial branch of our Government makes its decision, then we'll proceed forward, giving people fair and open trials.

I just want you to remember we are in a war against these terrorists. My most solemn obligation is to protect the American people from further attack. These people are being treated humanely. There's very

few prison systems around the world that have seen such scrutiny as this one. And for those of you here on the continent of Europe who have doubt, I'd suggest buying an airplane ticket and going down and look—take a look for yourself.

We also talked about Africa. I told the Prime Minister I was proud of my country's tripling of aid to Africa since I've been the President. And as he mentioned, I proposed to double aid to Africa once again.

Our primary focus in Africa is going to be to focus efforts on solving people's problems. They've got a problem in HIV/AIDS, and we're leading the world when it comes to contributions—along with Denmark, by the way—in making sure antiretroviral drugs get to people who need help and helping set up an infrastructure so that prevention programs begin to work and follow up with programs that will help the orphans of HIV/AIDS families. Denmark has put a robust effort in place, as had the United States, and I'm proud of our efforts.

Over a million people die of malaria on the continent of Africa on an annual basis, most of whom are under 5 years old. This is a problem we can solve. I laid out an initiative the other day for $1.2 billion to help eradicate the scourges of malaria on the continent of Africa. This is an area where we can work together. And I agree strongly with what the Prime Minister said: We expect there to be good governance on the continent of Africa. I don't know how we can look our taxpayers in the eye and say, "This is a good deal, to give money to countries that are corrupt." What we're interested in, in our countries, is helping people, and therefore, we have said that we'll give aid, absolutely. We'll cancel debt—you bet—but we want to make sure that the governments invest in their people, invest in the health of their people, the education of their people, and fight corruption.

And then we talked about climate change as well. I'm looking forward to going to the G–8. Listen, I recognize that the surface of the Earth is warmer and that an increase in greenhouse gases caused by humans is contributing to the problem. Kyoto didn't work for the United States, and it, frankly, didn't work for the world. The reason it didn't work for the world is many developing nations weren't included in Kyoto.

I've also told our friends in Europe that Kyoto would have wrecked our economy. I don't see how you can be President of the United States and sign and agree to an agreement that would have put a lot of people out of work. See, I think there's a better way forward. I would call it the post-Kyoto era, where we can work together to share technologies, to control greenhouse gases as best as possible.

Listen, the United States, for national security reasons and economic security reasons, needs to diversify away from fossil fuels. And so we've put out a strategy to do just that, and I can't wait to share with our G–8 friends, just like I shared with the Prime Minister, our strategy. We spent about over $20 billion last year on research and development on new technologies that we are willing to share with the world.

There's no doubt in my mind that we'll be driving a different kind of automobile within a reasonable period of time, one powered by hydrogen. And the Prime Minister is most interested in this subject, and I look forward to sharing technologies, not only with our G–8 friends but also with countries like India and China, who will be at the G–8.

I want to thank you again, Mr. Prime Minister, for being such a steadfast person. You know, a lot of times people in politics chase opinion polls. I don't know if you poll this much in Denmark. We poll way too much in America, it seems like to me. [*Laughter*] It's a growth industry. [*Laughter*] What I appreciate is a leader who has a vision and the strength of character to do what he thinks is right, and that's what your Prime Minister has done. I'm proud

to call him friend. And thanks for hosting me today.

Prime Minister Rasmussen. Thank you, Mr. President.

And we are ready to answer some questions from Danish side, from American side.

War on Terror

Q. Thank you. Mr. President, you are visiting a country which you call a close ally and a partner. You're visiting a man whom you call your friend, and you just said you admire him and you are grateful for his support. Yet, I know you don't like the polls, but when you look at the opinion polls, when you look at what the public, the Danish people say, they don't quite agree with this strong support. They don't quite agree with your policies. One opinion poll said, less than 20 percent—over the weekend, said less than 20 percent support your foreign policy. Now, this is your chance—I'm sure you think what you're doing is right. This is your chance to tell these people, say something to convince them that you are right. What are you going to say to them?

President Bush. Well, I appreciate that. You just made my point about relying on polls. But that's fine, I mean, that's the current wisdom these days.

Look, we are laying the foundation for peace. Democracies don't war with each other. There is a debate going on around the world about the nature of this war on terror. I readily concede, some think it's just a law enforcement matter. I believe we're in for an ideological struggle. I believe the people that cause such great harm, not only in America but in other spots around the world, have an ideology that is vastly different from our ideology, one that's based upon human rights, freedom of religion, the ability for people to express themselves in the public square without fear of reprisal. And they use tactics that are trying to drive us from the world. They will kill on a moment's notice. They kill innocent women and children because they want to shake our will. That's what they're trying to do, and they have objectives. Their objective is to topple government. Their objective is to control. They use power, and we just can't let them do that.

And so I understand people aren't going to agree with decisions I make, but my job is to make decisions that I think are right and to lead. You know, I tell the American press corps all the time, following public polls is like chasing your tail, a dog chasing a tail. I truly believe we're laying the foundation for peace. I know the only way to defeat this ideology is with a better ideology, based upon freedom and human rights and dignity—human dignity. And it's—it hasn't been an easy period of time for a lot of people. I know that, but I feel strongly in my heart of hearts that the decisions we have made will make it easier for our grandchildren to look back at this point—to grow up in a peaceful—and look back and say, "Thank goodness these people had the courage of their convictions."

Tom [Tom Raum, Associated Press].

Upcoming Supreme Court Nomination

Q. Thank you, Mr. President. If I can ask you about a very important nomination you have to make back at home——

President Bush. Yes.

Q. You said you'd have a——

President Bush. This is the Supreme Court nomination.

Q. This is the Supreme Court nomination. You said you would fill it by October, by the new term of the Court. But would you consider delaying up until that point as much as possible to minimize the opposition's massive campaign against your choice? And when you do sit down and actually talk to prospective nominees, what kind of questions will you ask them?

President Bush. Thanks, Tom. The—first of all, I want the person confirmed and sitting by the time the Court meets again in October. And—in other words, that's the

backstop, and we'll work backwards to determine what is best for the Senate calendar to get the hearing and to get the vote, up or down, on the floor of the Senate.

Secondly, I've begun the review process of prospective candidates. On Air Force One, flying over, I've been reading about the different backgrounds and different opinions and different attitudes of the prospective nominees. As you know, I'm not a lawyer, thankfully. [*Laughter*] And so I will let my legal experts deal with the ramifications of legal opinions. I'll talk to people about just—I'll try to assess their character, their interests. I'm looking forward to the review process, the interview process as well.

When I first get back, I will consult with Members of the Senate—I have done so far; our staff continues to do so—and then I'll begin the interview process.

Africa

Q. Mr. President, when will you extend the fight for freedom and democracy to the African Continent? And could that involve use of military power, and if so, a new coalition of the willing, maybe including Danish forces?

Last part of the question is for the Prime Minister.

President Bush. Go ahead. Do you want to ask him the question first, before I finish? Okay—you said African Continent? Our attitude is that the best way for the African Continent to be peaceful and to resolve disputes is to have African troops do the work. The Prime Minister is right in calling for more training for peacekeepers. As a matter of fact, America has strongly thought that was the best way to go forward, and I think we promoted this concept at the last G–8.

I'm sure you're aware that the Sudan has been of great interest for my Government. As a matter of fact, thanks to the good efforts of former Secretary of State Colin Powell and Ambassador Jack Danforth, we actually negotiated a treaty between north and south that we're now in the process of implementing. And then, of course, Darfur broke out. And we've been greatly concerned about the human suffering—as a matter of fact, I believe the only nation thus far to call the conditions there genocide.

And we've been deeply involved in providing, first, aid, but also a strategy that will help calm the situation down so that there can be a settlement, a peaceful settlement of the situation. And that requires the transportation of African Union forces. I believe we're going to go from about—the world, that is—is going to go from 2,200 African Union forces to 7,100 African Union forces. The United States, in working with NATO and the EU, will be providing airlift capacity to help get those troops on the ground. The other day I announced that we're going to work with the folks on the ground there to help construct new camps so that the refugees will have better conditions.

The whole idea is to, one, get aid to people as quickly as possible, so as to prevent any mass starvation and, secondly, get a political settlement moving forward. But no, the best way to deal with dispute and the civil war that make it awfully hard for the human condition to improve on the continent is for African nations to be trained and equipped and prepared to do the job.

You've got a question for him? Give him a question.

Prime Minister Rasmussen. Yes, the last part of it. We have engaged ourselves in peacekeeping missions in Africa. We have provided funds for the African Union to enable the Africans to prevent and manage crisis themselves. And we will pursue that strategy in the future.

President Bush. Reuters man, Toby [Tabassum Zakaria, Reuters]. Woman—excuse me. I can see that. [*Laughter*] So how long have you been on the Presidential beat?

Q. Since February.

President Bush. Yes. Well, make yourself less scarce.

Upcoming Supreme Court Nomination

Q. I also wanted to ask you a question about your Supreme Court nomination.

President Bush. Here I am, trying to talk to the people of Denmark, and you're asking me about local news. That's fine.

Q. What do you think of the criticism of Attorney General Gonzales as a potential nominee? And will there be a litmus test on abortion and gay marriage when you consider your choice?

President Bush. Thanks. First of all, as I said during both of my campaigns, there will be no litmus test. I'll pick people who, one, can do the job, people who are honest, people who are bright, and people who will strictly interpret the Constitution and not use the bench to legislate from. That's what I campaigned on, and that's what I'm going to do.

She's referring to the fact that my Attorney General, longtime friend, a guy who was my—close when I was the Governor of Texas, came up to Washington with me as part of the movement of Texans south to north during the Government. He's been my lawyer in the White House. He's now the Attorney General. He's under—he's being criticized. I don't like it when a friend gets criticized. I'm loyal to my friends. And all of a sudden this fellow, who is a good public servant and a really fine person, is under fire. And so, do I like it? No, I don't like it at all.

I look forward to making the pick. And I look forward to doing what I said I was going to do when it comes to making that pick. This is a very important selection, and I understand its importance. I will take my time. I will be thorough in my investigation. My staff has already done a lot of work. They continue to work today, not only in reaching out to the Senate but also spending time making sure that all the candidates will be put forward in a proper way.

The other thing about this debate is, I hope the United States Senate conducts themselves in a way that brings dignity to the process and that the Senators don't listen to the special interest groups, particularly those on the extremes that are trying to exploit this opportunity for not only their—what they may think is right but also for their own fundraising capabilities. The Senate needs to conduct themselves in a dignified way and have a good, honest debate about the credentials of the person I have put forward, no matter who he or she is, and then give the person an up-or-down vote. That's how the process ought to work.

And so this is an opportunity for good public servants to exhibit a civil discourse on a very important matter and not let these groups, these money-raising groups, these special interest groups, these groups outside the process dictate the rhetoric, the tone. And I'm confident the Senators, most Senators want to conduct themselves this way.

It will be a really interesting moment, and I'm sure you're interested in watching the process, for those of you in the Danish press. It's going to be quite an interesting exercise in democracy. I just hope that the people responsible for hearing—holding the hearings and voting up or down are able to have a civil discourse. It would be good for the country; it would be good for people's understanding of how democracy works.

Listen, Her Majesty is fixing to host a lunch, for which I am grateful. Thank you all for coming. Thank you, Prime Minister.

Prime Minister Rasmussen. Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President's news conference began at 10:02 a.m. in the Marienborg. In his remarks, he referred to Queen Margrethe II of Denmark. Prime Minister Rasmussen referred to President Robert Mugabe of Zimbabwe.

Remarks Following Discussions With Prime Minister Tony Blair of the United Kingdom and an Exchange With Reporters in Auchterarder, Scotland

July 7, 2005

Prime Minister Blair. Good morning, everyone. First of all, can I say a warm welcome to the President of the United States here at the G–8 summit. And I hope and believe we'll have a good and productive couple of days. You know the issues that are there—Africa and climate change—and I hope and believe we can make good progress on both of them.

We've had a good discussion this morning, and the commitments that we've entered into over the past period of time on Africa, as you know, has—through the focus of the G–8, I think has meant that we are in a position where I hope, very much, we can meet the reasonable expectations of many millions of people outside.

And on climate change, obviously, we've been discussing the issue and whether it's going to be possible to move into a different position on this issue in the future, where the world can come together. I certainly hope so.

Obviously, again, we discussed the broad range of issues too, the issue of Iraq and Iran, the broader Middle East, and so on—the normal range of issues you'd expect.

So I think that's all I really need to say by way of opening. The President will say a few words. And then we just—I've got the President of China coming shortly that I have to go and greet. And we'll take a question from the British and a question from the Americans, if that's okay.

Mr. President.

President Bush. Thank you, Tony. It's a beautiful day for a bike ride. [*Laughter*] So was yesterday, I thought. But thank you for your leadership. This is going to be a successful summit.

The reason why is, is that the Prime Minister set very important goals for the industrialized world to meet, one of which is to help impoverished people on the continent of Africa. I'm proud of my Nation's contribution toward meeting that goal. I think the world, when they take a good look at what we've achieved here, will say that all of us are living up to the admonition that to whom much is given, much is required.

I bring some specific projects to the table. One is to do something about malaria on the continent of Africa. Another is to educate young girls on the continent of Africa. Another is to help battered women on the continent of Africa as well as our broader initiatives of trade and HIV/AIDS initiative.

Speaking about trade, I think it's very important for the world to hear very clearly the position of the United States, and that is that we want to work with the EU to rid our respective countries of agricultural subsidies. The best place to do that is at the Doha round. I would hope that by 2010, that the Doha round will achieve that objective.

Secondly, the Prime Minister has put global climate change on the table. This is an important issue. It's an issue that we—where there's been disagreement in the past. But I think if people, again, look at what the Prime Minister, through his leadership, has achieved, there is a consensus that we need to move forward together.

The way to move forward together is to recognize, one, there's a problem, which I have—since I've been the President, and two, that there is a constructive way to deal with the problem. The most constructive way to deal with the problem from our perspective is, one, to not only include

the United States in discussions but also include developing countries in discussions, countries like India and China.

So you made a wise move, Mr. Prime Minister, to have invited India and China to this conference, where we will discuss our economic growth potential, coupled with the need to be wise stewards of the environment.

Secondly, this is a great opportunity to discuss the need to share technologies. We're spending over $20 billion a year on the issue of global warming and on the issue of how to diversify ourselves away from a hydrocarbon-based economy, so that we can not only have economic security and better national security but also so we can deal with this important issue. And I look forward to the discussions we're going to have on this important topic.

As the Prime Minister said, we also talked about the freedom agenda. One of the interesting discussions we're going to have this afternoon is progress being made between the Palestinians and Israelis. And I believe Jim Wolfensohn is coming, who is representing not only the United States but also members of the EU, to discuss a way forward. And I look forward to having that discussion and look forward to concrete ways that we all can contribute to this very important process.

All and all, Mr. Prime Minister, you've done a fine job. Thanks for having us. You picked a beautiful location, and of course, you've painted a beautiful day for us.

Thank you.

Prime Minister Blair. Thank you very much. Okay, Tom [Tom Raum, Associated Press]—one UK, then one——

Climate Change

Q. Mr. President, could I ask you about climate change? First of all, have you in any way changed your own view about this? And do you regard emissions targets as now off the table in terms of resolving this problem?

President Bush. I think if you look at a speech I gave in the Rose Garden there at the White House, I believe it was in the year 2001, I recognized that greenhouse gases were an issue and that we must deal with it. I also strongly believe that technologies and the proper use of technologies will enable the world to grow our economies and, at the same time, be wiser about how we protect the environment.

I said that based upon scientific evidence, the goal of the United States is to reduce, neutralize—neutralize and then reduce emissions of greenhouse gases over time. And so my position has been pretty steady. What I didn't agree to was a way forward that, one, would have endangered our economy, and a way forward that excluded developing nations. I think there's a better way.

And the reason I'm appreciative of the Prime Minister for putting this on the—putting this issue on the agenda is that we're now developing the better way forward. And the United States is more than happy to participate——

Q. ——including in targets, emissions targets——

President Bush. We believe there's a better way than—actually, I've set targets. The targets I've set are based upon efficiency standards that we would reduce greenhouse gases by 18 percent, relative to our economic growth. And we're meeting those targets.

But the former construct just didn't work for us. And I fully recognize that by making that point, it was not a popular position in parts of the world. Now is the time to get beyond the Kyoto period and develop a strategy forward that is inclusive not only of the United States but of the developing nations and, of course, nations like Great Britain.

And so the Prime Minister did the world a service by putting this on the agenda, and it's a chance to talk constructively and positively about what is possible. For example, for the United States to—for our own

economic security and national security, we have got to become less dependent on hydrocarbons. And the best way to do that is to develop new ways to power our automobiles through a—and so I've laid out a hydrogen initiative in which we're going to spend over a billion dollars to develop research necessary to help foster new ways to power automobiles—by the way, which will have an enormous effect on the future state of the environment.

So here's a way, for example, for us to work together. And it's—Great Britain can be a great part of the hydrogen initiative, and I think the Prime Minister wants to be. Japan, of course, will play a leading role in the hydrogen initiative, and Prime Minister Koizumi is at the table. Germany should play a great role. In other words, there's an opportunity for those of us who have got the capacity to spend research dollars to share information. As I told you, we're spending over $20 billion a year to be better stewards of the environment and, at the same time, make sure that in the out years, we can grow our economy in a reasonable way.

Sorry, go ahead.

Prime Minister Blair. I was just going to come in here and say, I think you've got to understand what we're trying to do here. And I think people do, but it's just worth me saying this: There's no point in going back over the Kyoto debate. My country has got its position on Kyoto, as have others; America has got its position on Kyoto. That is an argument that there has been, and we can't resolve that, and we're not going to negotiate some new treaty on climate change at the G–8 summit. That's not what it's about.

What it is about is seeing whether it will be possible in the future to bring people back into consensus together, not just America and Europe and Japan but also America, Europe, Japan, and the emerging economies like China, like India, who in the future, are going to be the major consumers of energy.

Now, can we do that? I don't know. But it's important that we at least begin a process of dialog that allows us to make progress on it. And as you've just heard, it's not that America is saying, "Well, we don't care about this issue." The investment in research and development into clean technologies is probably greater in America than any other country in the world. The question is, can we, as we go forward, create the conditions in which, when Kyoto ends, which it does in 2012, it's possible for the world to move into consensus? And if it isn't possible, then we've got a real problem for the future.

So it's important we set out the ambitions for this summit in a measured way. We're not going to resolve every single issue at the G–8 summit in relation to this, but I think what we can do is narrow the issues down, get agreement that there is a problem, that we need to tackle it, that we need to move forward together in doing so, and then give ourselves the pathways—I said to you guys yesterday—give ourselves the pathway into a process that will allow us, post-Kyoto, to get back into agreement.

And that's—and no disrespect to anyone's position on the existing Kyoto treaty. Everyone has got their positions on that, and that's not going to change. There's no point in thinking that's going to change, but the future is crucial.

President Bush. I'm trying to recover from my faux pas yesterday. I made a terrible mistake yesterday. Toby [Tabassum Zakaria, Reuters]—[*laughter*]—listen, I don't want to revisit—I don't——

Prime Minister Blair. That's an intro for the American media. [*Laughter*]

President Bush. I don't want to revisit the mistake. Let's just say, slightly offensive—wrong gender when I called on her.

Proposed Unocal Corporation Purchase

Q. Mr. President, how can the United States, on one hand, urge China to play by the rules of the global economy and move toward a flexible currency and, on

the other hand, efforts by Chinese companies like CNOOC to expand seem to be running into some roadblocks?

President Bush. Well, what she's referring to is the fact that a Chinese oil company that's owned by the Government is attempting to purchase U.S. assets. And there's been some concern expressed by Members of the Congress in the form of a resolution that said that we are concerned about economic security—and national security for that matter—when it comes to a state-owned company purchasing private assets.

There is a process that our Government uses to analyze such purchases—or intent to purchase. And it's best that I allow that process to move forward without comment.

Thank you.

Prime Minister Blair. Okay, thanks very much, guys. See you later.

President's Bike Accident

Q. How are you?

President Bush. Feeling good, yes. Great. Ready to go for another ride.

Q. Did you hurt yourself badly?

President Bush. No. Talked to the policeman last night. He's doing fine. I'm less worried about myself and more worried about him. It just goes to show that I should act my age. [*Laughter*]

Q. Were you wearing a helmet when you crashed?

President Bush. Absolutely.

Q. Did you crash into his bike? Is that what happened?

President Bush. No, no, he was standing. I hit slick pavement. I was—we were flying coming in. And by the way, when you ride hard on a mountain bike, sometimes you fall. Otherwise, you're not riding hard. And it was at the end of a good hour ride. The pavement was slick, and the bike came out from underneath me—just like that—just like that person on the Tour de France the other day. He's a lot better bike rider than I am, but—[*laughter*]—that other American.

Q. It's something to do when you retire——

President Bush. I don't think so. I think I'm—I think I found my limitations. But, I can't—for those of you who like to mountain bike, I would strongly suggest getting out in this beautiful countryside. It is a spectacular part of the world. Just be careful on the finish. [*Laughter*]

NOTE: The President spoke at 8:39 a.m. at the Gleneagles Hotel. In his remarks, he referred to James D. Wolfensohn, Quartet Special Envoy for Gaza Disengagement; and Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi of Japan. Prime Minister Blair referred to President Hu Jintao of China.

Remarks on the Terrorist Attacks in London From Auchterarder, Scotland *July 7, 2005*

I spent some time recently with the Prime Minister, Tony Blair, and had an opportunity to express our heartfelt condolences to the people of London, people who lost lives. I appreciate Prime Minister Blair's steadfast determination and his strength. He's on his way now to London here from the G–8 to speak directly to the people of London. He'll carry a message of solidarity with him.

This morning I have been in contact with our Homeland Security folks. I instructed them to be in touch with local and State officials about the facts of what took place here and in London and to be extra vigilant as our folks start heading to work.

The contrast between what we've seen on the TV screens here, what's taken place in London and what's taking place here, is incredibly vivid to me. On the one hand, we have people here who are working to alleviate poverty, to help rid the world of the pandemic of AIDS, working on ways to have a clean environment, and on the other hand, you've got people killing innocent people. And the contrast couldn't be clearer between the intentions and the hearts of those of us who care deeply about human rights and human liberty, and those who kill—those who have got such evil in their heart that they will take the lives of innocent folks.

The war on terror goes on. I was most impressed by the resolve of all the leaders in the room. Their resolve is as strong as my resolve, and that is we will not yield to these people, will not yield to the terrorists. We will find them. We will bring them to justice, and at the same time, we will spread an ideology of hope and compassion that will overwhelm their ideology of hate.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:30 p.m. at the Gleneagles Hotel. In his remarks, he referred to Prime Minister Tony Blair of the United Kingdom. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of these remarks.

Remarks on Signing the Book of Condolence at the Embassy of the United Kingdom

July 8, 2005

President Bush. Yesterday was an incredibly sad day for a lot of families in London. It's my honor, Ambassador, to come and represent our great country in extending our condolences to the people of Great Britain. To those who suffer loss of life, we pray for God's blessings. For those who are injured, we pray for fast healing. The British people are steadfast and strong. Long we've admired the great spirit of the—of Londoners and the people of Great Britain. Once again that great strength of character is coming through.

Thank you, Ambassador, for letting me come by.

Ambassador David Manning of the United Kingdom. Well, Mr. President, could I just say thank you very much, sir, for coming straight here from the airplane after the summit at the G–8. It's enormously good of you to come here. The gesture is hugely appreciated. And can I say to you that we have had the most wonderful gestures of support from the Americans over the last 36 hours. We're very grateful for that. It's a huge source of comfort, and thank you so much for coming today.

President Bush. Yes, sir.

NOTE: The President spoke at 5:17 p.m. at the British Embassy.

The President's Radio Address
July 9, 2005

Good morning. Thursday morning, terrorists struck at the heart of one of the world's great cities in a series of bombings that hit London's subway and bus system as thousands of commuters headed to work. We in America know the sense of loss that our British friends feel at this moment. We extend our sympathies to those who suffered terrible injuries, and we pray for the families mourning the loss of loved ones. In this dark hour, the people of Great Britain can know that the American people stand with them.

These barbaric attacks occurred as world leaders gathered in Scotland for the G–8 summit. While terrorists were killing innocent men and women in London, leaders at the G–8 were discussing how free nations can combat poverty and HIV/AIDS, create a cleaner environment, and improve the lives of people everywhere. The contrast could not be more vivid between the intentions and the hearts of those who care deeply about human rights and human liberty, and the evil intentions and acts of those who rejoice in the death and suffering of the innocent.

We experienced this evil in our own country on a clear September morning in 2001. Since that day, terrorists have continued to kill and maim in Bali and Casablanca, Riyadh, Jakarta, Istanbul, Madrid, Baghdad, London, and elsewhere. The terrorists believe that free societies are essentially corrupt and decadent. They believe that with a few hard blows and the televised repetition of horrific images of violence, they can force us to retreat. They are mistaken.

On the day of the London attacks, every world leader at the G–8 summit stood with Prime Minister Blair as he said, "Our determination to defend our values and our way of life is greater than their determination to cause death and destruction to innocent people." The free world is united in its resolve: We will never yield to terrorists and murderers. In the face of such adversaries, there is only one course of action: We will continue to take the fight to the enemy, and we will fight until the enemy is defeated.

We are now waging a global war on terror from the mountains of Afghanistan to the border regions of Pakistan to the Horn of Africa to the islands of the Philippines to the plains of Iraq. We will stay on the offense, fighting the terrorists abroad so we do not have to face them at home. We will continue to deny the terrorists safe haven and the support of rogue states. And at the same time, we will spread the universal values of hope and freedom that will overwhelm their ideology of tyranny and hate. The free world did not seek this conflict, yet we will win it.

Here at home, Federal, State, and local officials are doing everything possible to protect us from another terrorist attack in America. While we have no specific credible information suggesting an imminent attack in the United States, in light of the bombings in London, we have raised the threat level from elevated to high for our passenger rail, subway, and bus systems. I urge all Americans to remain alert and to report any suspicious activity to your local authorities.

This week, there is great suffering in the city of London. Yet the British people are resilient, and they have faced brutal enemies before. The nation that survived the Nazi blitz will not be intimidated by terrorists. And just as America and Great Britain stood together to defeat the murderous ideologies of the 20th century, we again stand together to defeat the hateful ideologies of the 21st century.

The terrorists cannot shake our will. America and its allies will act decisively,

because we know that the future of civilization is at stake in this struggle, and we know that the cause of freedom will prevail.

May God bless the people of Great Britain, and may He continue to bless America.

Thank you for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 9:25 a.m. on July 8 at the Gleneagles Hotel in Auchterarder, Scotland, for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on July 9. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on July 8 but was embargoed for release until the broadcast. In his address, the President referred to Prime Minister Tony Blair of the United Kingdom. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of this address.

Remarks at the FBI National Academy in Quantico, Virginia
July 11, 2005

Thanks for the warm welcome. It's my pleasure to be back here at Quantico, the FBI Academy. I'm honored to be with so many courageous men and women who have stepped forward to protect our Nation.

Today, we are fighting a global war on terror. And here at Quantico, you're training and retraining for a critical mission, and that's to defend our homeland. You're fighting the terrorists who wish to harm us. You're breaking up their cells. You're disrupting their financing. You are stopping them before they can strike our country and kill our citizens. Your work is difficult. It is dangerous. I want you to know how much your country appreciates you, and so do I.

I thank the FBI folks who have welcomed me here. I also want to thank the DEA agents who are with us here today. By working to keep drug money from financing terror, you're playing an important part in this world—in this war. I want to thank the U.S. and international police officers who are training here. I want to thank the local first-responders who have joined us. You protect us in times of emergency. I want to thank you for being on the frontlines of fighting these terrorists.

Quantico is also known as the "Crossroads of the Corps." In the war on terror, the Marines are serving with valor and distinction. You helped liberate 50 million people in Afghanistan and Iraq. Today, you stand between the American people and the worst dangers in the world. In this war, the Marines will fight, in the words of the Rifleman's Creed, "Until victory is America's and there is no enemy." America is grateful to have the United States Marine Corps defending our freedom. I want to thank you for your courage and your sacrifice.

I appreciate our Attorney General, Al Gonzales, who has joined us today. General, thank you for being here. I want to thank Ambassador John Negroponte, the Director of the National Intelligence. Thanks for coming, Mr. Director. I appreciate Director Bob Mueller of the FBI—doing a fantastic job. Thank you, Bob, for coming. Director Porter Goss of the CIA; Administrator Karen Tandy of the Drug Administration—the Drug Enforcement Administration—[*laughter*]—thank you, Karen.

I appreciate the chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee, Senator John Warner of Virginia, joining us today. Senator, thank you for coming. Senator George Allen from Virginia is with us as well. And I appreciate the vice chairman of the House Homeland Security Committee, Congressman Curt Weldon, for being with us today. Thank you all for being here.

Finally, I appreciate Colonel Mike Lowe, the Base Commander at Quantico. Colonel, thank you very much. I appreciate your hospitality today, and I appreciate your hospitality when I bring my mountain bike out here to ride. [*Laughter*]

In London last Thursday, terrorists killed dozens of commuters and wounded hundreds more. Americans know what it's like to be attacked on our own soil. Our hearts go out to the many innocent people in London who suffered terrible injuries, and we pray for the families mourning the loss of loved ones. In this difficult hour, the people of Great Britain can know the American people stand with you.

I was with the Prime Minister, Prime Minister Tony Blair, at the G–8 summit in Scotland when the terrorists struck his homeland. The contrast could not have been more vivid. We were there to discuss ways to make the world a better and more compassionate place, and in London, the terrorists were killing innocent men and women in cold blood. These attacks were barbaric, and they provide a clear window into the evil we face.

We don't know who committed the attacks in London, but we do know that terrorists celebrate the suffering of the innocent. We do know that terrorists murder in the name of a totalitarian ideology that hates freedom, rejects tolerance, and despises all dissent. Their aim—the aim of the terrorists is to remake the Middle East in their own grim image of tyranny and oppression by toppling governments, by exporting terror, by forcing free nations to retreat and withdraw.

To achieve these aims, they attacked our country on September the 11th, 2001. They've continued to kill in Bali, in Casablanca, Riyadh, Jakarta, Istanbul, Madrid, and elsewhere. These kind of people who blow up subways and buses are not people you can negotiate with or reason with or appease. In the face of such adversaries, there is only one course of action: We will continue to take the fight to the enemy, and we will fight until this enemy is defeated.

The terrorists want to attack our country and harm our citizens. They believe that the world's democracies are weak and that by killing innocent civilians, they can break our will. They're mistaken. America will not retreat in the face of terrorists and murderers, and neither will the free world. As Prime Minister Blair said after the attacks in London, "Our determination to defend our values and our way of life is greater than their determination to cause death and destruction to innocent people." The attack in London was an attack on the civilized world. And the civilized world is united in its resolve: We will not yield; we will defend our freedom.

Our Nation has no greater mission than stopping the terrorists from launching new and more deadly attacks. And whether you're fighting the terrorists in Afghanistan or Iraq or routing out terrorists here at home, America is counting on you to stop them.

To accomplish this vital mission, we have a comprehensive strategy in place. We're working to protect the homeland. We're working to improve our intelligence so we can uncover terrorist plots before they unfold, and we're staying on the offensive. We're fighting the enemy in Iraq and Afghanistan and across the world so we do not have to face them here at home.

And we are spreading the hope of freedom across the broader Middle East. By offering an alternative to the terrorists' dark vision of hatred and fear, we are laying the foundation of peace for our children and our grandchildren.

To protect the American people, we continue to take extraordinary measures to defend the homeland. We created a new Department of Homeland Security. We're posting Homeland Security personnel at foreign ports and strengthening airport and seaport security. We're instituting better visa screening for those entering the United States. We're working to prevent potential

terrorists from coming across our borders and violating our immigration laws. We're protecting our Nation's critical infrastructure, our bridges and tunnels, our transportation systems, our nuclear powerplants and water treatment facilities, and the cyber networks that keep our Government and our economy running.

We've provided more than $14 billion over the last 4 years to train and equip local first-responders. In all, we've more than tripled funding for homeland security since 2001. We're working tirelessly to protect the American people and to prevent new terrorists attacks. In an age of new dangers, we're doing everything in our power to do our jobs. And I want to thank you for your hard work.

To defend our homeland, we need the best possible intelligence. We face a new kind of enemy. This enemy hides in caves and plots in shadows and then emerges to strike and kill in cold blood in our cities and communities. Staying a step ahead of this enemy and disrupting their plans is an unprecedented challenge for our intelligence community. We're reforming our intelligence agencies to meet the new threats. We've established a new National Counterterrorism Center where we are bringing together all the available intelligence on terrorist threats. We're sharing intelligence across all levels of government, the Federal level, the State level, and the local level.

We're working with our allies to share information and to prevent terrorists from obtaining weapons of mass destruction. Thanks to the hard work of hundreds in our intelligence community, we have stopped a number of grave threats to the American people. Together with our allies, we uncovered and dismantled Libya's nuclear program. We worked with Pakistan and other nations to shut down the world's most dangerous nuclear trading network. And since September the 11th, our coalition has disrupted a number of Al Qaida terrorist plots, arrested Al Qaida operatives here to case specific U.S. targets, and caught others trying to sneak into our country.

Our enemy is constantly studying our defenses and adapting its own tactics, so we must constantly strengthen our capabilities. And that's why I appointed a bipartisan Commission, led by Judge Laurence Silberman and former Senator Chuck Robb. I asked them to give me an unvarnished look at our intelligence capabilities and our intelligence successes as well as analyzing our intelligence failures. Two weeks ago, after careful review, I approved 70 of the Commission's recommendations for implementation.

One of the new steps we're taking is the creation of the National Security Service within the FBI, to more completely integrate the Bureau's work with the intelligence community. The purpose of this change is to strengthen the FBI, so it not only investigates terrorist crimes after they happen, but the FBI can be more capable to stop the terrorist acts before they happen. The FBI is in the fight. The FBI has deployed its personnel across the world, in Iraq and Afghanistan and other fronts in the war on terror. FBI agents are questioning captured terrorists and uncovering information that will help prevent new attacks on our homeland.

Here in America, the FBI has helped break up terrorist cells and financing networks in California, in Oregon, Illinois, North Carolina, New York, New Jersey, Virginia, Florida, and other States. And one of the important tools Federal agents have used to protect America is the PATRIOT Act. I call on Congress to reauthorize the 16 critical provisions of this act that are scheduled to expire at the end of this year. The terrorist threats against us will not expire at the end of this year and neither should the protections of the PATRIOT Act.

The FBI efforts are central to our success in the war on terror. The agents and analysts in this hall and your colleagues

around the country, work around the clock to prevent new attacks, and I thank you for that. With every cell you uncover and every terrorist you arrest, you're making this country safer. Thanks for a job well done.

We know that there is no such thing as perfect security and that in a free and open society, it is impossible to protect against every threat. As we saw in London last week, the terrorists need to be right only once. Free nations need to be right 100 percent of the time. The best way to defend America is to stay on the offense. When terrorists spread their—spend their days and nights struggling to avoid death or capture, they are less capable of arming and training and plotting new attacks.

So, together with our allies, we're on the offense, and we will stay on the offense. We have damaged the Al Qaida network across the world. In the Persian Gulf, Al Qaida's chief of operations has been captured. In southeast Asia, a top strategist for Al Qaida's associate group was captured. In Pakistan, top Al Qaida leaders have been captured, including one of bin Laden's senior terrorist facilitators. We captured the mastermind of the September the 11th attacks. We captured a terrorist involved in the bombings of the U.S. Embassies in Kenya and Tanzania, and a key planner in the attack on the USS *Cole.* Our ally Pakistan has killed or captured more than 600 terrorists, including bin Laden's chief of operations, a man named al-Libbi. Saudi Arabia has killed or captured more than two dozen of its most wanted terrorists.

The terrorists remain dangerous, but from the mountains of Afghanistan to the border regions of Pakistan to the Horn of Africa and to the islands of the Philippines, our coalition is bringing our enemies to justice and bringing justice to our enemies. We will keep the terrorists on the run until they have no place left to hide.

In the war on terror, Iraq is now a central front. The terrorists fight in Iraq because they know that the survival of their hateful ideology is at stake. They know that as freedom takes root in Iraq, it will inspire millions across the Middle East to claim their liberty as well. And when the Middle East grows in democracy and prosperity and hope, the terrorists will lose their sponsors. They'll lose their recruits. They will lose their hopes for turning that region into a base of attacks against America and our allies.

The stakes in Iraq are high, and no one knows the stakes better than our troops. An American battalion commander in Iraq put it this way in an e-mail: "I know that most of you are probably asking if our presence here and loss of human life are worth it. We're here for a purpose. And if not now, when will we stand up to the terrorists that are sick enough to do these things in God's name?"

We are standing up, and the sacrifice is worth it. By helping Iraq's—the Iraqis build a free nation that is an ally in the war on terror, we are advancing the cause of freedom and the cause of peace.

To help Iraqis build a free nation, we have a clear plan, with both a military track and a political track. Our military is pursuing the terrorists and helping to train Iraqi security forces so they can defend their people and fight the enemy on their own. Our plan can be summed up this way: As the Iraqis stand up, we will stand down.

Our troops see the progress the Iraqi security forces have made. Captain Glenn Colby of the Rhode Island National Guard says that when he arrived in Iraq over a year ago, the Iraqi police were afraid to go outside their building. Recently, he says, the soldiers were on patrol when the Iraqi police charged past them in hot pursuit of insurgents. He says of the Iraqi police, quote, "Now you see them everywhere. You see them at checkpoints on the streets. You see them on patrol. You see them stand and fight."

The Iraqi people are seeing progress. They're stepping forward to the fight. One Iraqi who stepped forward is a traffic cop

named Jamal. Recently, Jamal was training in the city of Irbil with about 200 other recruits, when a red car came hurtling toward them and it exploded. He survived, but many of his comrades did not. Here's what he says: "I saw friends killed and wounded and crying out and blood everywhere. It is not the first time they tried to kill us. We're not afraid. I'll stay a policeman and serve my country." Americans are proud to serve alongside such brave allies, people willing to take risk for democracy and freedom, people willing to sacrifice.

The leaders of the new Iraqi military see the progress. The Iraqi general in charge of his country's elite special forces puts it this way: "Before, the Americans were taking the lead, and we were following." Now, he said proudly of his forces, "We're taking the lead." We are working for the day when the entire Iraqi army can say the same thing. Our coalition will help Iraqis so they can fight the enemy on their own. And then American forces can come home to a proud and grateful nation.

We know that the terrorists will not be defeated by force of arms alone. Iraqis need a strong military to engage the enemy. But just as important is a strong and secure democracy that will provide an alternative to the terrorists' ideology of hate. So Iraqis are hard at work building the institutions of a free society.

In January, more than 8 million Iraqis defied the terrorists and cast their ballots in the country's first free elections in decades. Now, their Transitional National Assembly is working to write a new constitution for a free Iraq. And Iraq's new leaders are reaching out to Sunni Arabs who did not participate in the January elections. Last week, 15 Sunni Arab delegates jointed the committee that is drafting a new Iraqi constitution. More and more, Sunni Arabs say they intend to vote in the constitutional referendum later this year. Support for the democratic progress—process is growing throughout Iraq, including in the Sunni Arab communities.

As a Iraqis take these steps toward political and military reform, they are building a free nation that will be a beacon—a beacon of liberty in the Middle East. The success of democracy in Iraq is sending forth the news from Damascus to Tehran that freedom can be the future of every nature.

The Palestinian people have gone to the polls and have chosen a leader committed to negotiation instead of violence. In Lebanon, people took to the streets to demand the restoration of their sovereignty, and they have now gone to the polls and voted in free elections. And as freedom spreads in these countries, it is inspiring democratic reformers in places like Egypt and Saudi Arabia.

Our troops on the frontlines see this transformation up close. Marine Lance Corporal Marty Schwader recently returned from Iraq. He says, "We really kicked something off in the Middle East, and all the countries over there are starting to really think about the way they want to run their countries."

The heart of our strategy is this: Free societies are peaceful societies. So in the long run, the only way to defeat the ideologies of hatred and fear, the only way to make sure our country is secure in the long run, is to advance the cause of freedom.

We have seen freedom conquer evil and secure the peace before. In World War II, free nations came together to fight the ideology of fascism, and freedom prevailed. And today, Germany and Japan are allies in securing the peace. In the cold war, freedom defeated the ideology of communism and led to a Europe whole, free, and at peace.

Today in the Middle East, freedom is once again contending with an ideology that seeks to sow anger and hatred and despair. And like fascism and communism before, the hateful ideologies that use terror will

be defeated by the unstoppable power of freedom and democracy.

The Prime Minister recently said, "There is no hope in terrorism nor any future in it worth living, and it is the hope that is the alternative to this hatred." So we'll spread the hope of freedom and leave a more peaceful world for our children and our grandchildren.

This week there's great suffering in the city of London, but Londoners are resilient. They have faced brutal enemies before. A city that survived the Nazi blitz will not yield in the face of thugs and assassins. And just as America and Great Britain stood together to defeat the totalitarian ideologies of the 20th century, we now stand together against the murderous ideologies of the 21st century.

History teaches us that we can be confident in the future because the darkness of tyranny is no match for the shining power of freedom. There will be tough fighting ahead. There will be difficult moments along the path to victory. The terrorists know they can't defeat us on the battlefield. The only way the terrorists can win is if we lose our nerve. This isn't going to happen on my watch. America and its allies will continue to act decisively, and the cause of freedom will prevail.

Thank you for your service.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:37 a.m. In his remarks, he referred to Prime Minister Tony Blair of the United Kingdom; Abd al-Rahim al-Nashiri, Al Qaida's chief of operations for the Persian Gulf; Nurjaman Riduan Isamuddin (also known as Hambali), Al Qaida's chief operational planner in Southeast Asia; Khalid Sheikh Mohammed, senior Al Qaida leader responsible for planning the September 11, 2001, terrorist attack, who was captured in Pakistan on March 1, 2003; Usama bin Laden, leader of the Al Qaida terrorist organization; Abu Faraj al-Libbi, senior Al Qaida associate arrested in Pakistan on April 30; and President Mahmoud Abbas (Abu Mazen) of the Palestinian Authority. The President also referred to the Commission on the Intelligence Capabilities of the United States Regarding Weapons of Mass Destruction. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of these remarks.

Message on the Observance of the 10th Anniversary of the Massacre in Srebrenica

June 11, 2005

On July 11, we remember the tragic loss of lives in Srebrenica ten years ago. The mass murder of nearly eight thousand men and boys was Europe's worst massacre of civilians since World War II and a grim reminder that there are evil people who will kill the innocent without conscience or mercy. This horrific event remains a source of pain for people in the Balkan region and for all those who believe in freedom and the dignity of human life. I join all Americans in sending our deepest condolences and expressions of sympathy on this solemn occasion.

The United States supports the people of Bosnia and Herzegovina and the families of those who suffered as they commemorate this terrible chapter in history. We grieve for their loss and applaud the strength and courage of those who have returned to Srebrenica to rebuild their lives. We also remain committed to ensuring that those responsible for these crimes face justice, most notably Radovan Karadzic and Ratko Mladic.

I appreciate all the individuals who are advancing reconciliation and a strong European future for Bosnia and Herzegovina. A modern and democratic Balkan region is an essential element in a Europe that is unified, free, and at peace. As we work to make the world more peaceful, we share a common faith in the value of freedom, the sanctity of life, and the triumph of good over evil.

May God bless the people of the Balkan region and the souls of the departed.

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

Remarks Following Discussions With Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong of Singapore and an Exchange With Reporters
July 12, 2005

President Bush. Mr. Prime Minister, welcome.

Prime Minister Lee. Thank you.

President Bush. We've just had a very interesting and comprehensive discussion about our bilateral relations, which are strong. But Singapore is—is a country that has an interesting position in the Far East. The Prime Minister brings a perspective about the U.S. role, about the future of the region that I have found fascinating. The Prime Minister is a strategic thinker. He obviously worries about the lives of the citizens in his country, daily lives, in what's taking place, but he's also got the capacity to see beyond the horizon.

And I want to thank you for sharing your insights. I appreciate so very much your—your advice. And I look forward to working with you. We're going to sign a very important document here, cementing our good relationship.

And finally, the Prime Minister and I share a clear vision about the world in which we live when it comes to terror—these terrorists that kill on a moment's notice. They don't care who you are. They want to shake our will. They want to drive America from the world. They want the free world to retreat. They've got ideological ambitions, and it's going to require a steadfast response, and the Prime Minister understands that.

And I appreciate your strength of character and your clear vision about the dangers we face. Welcome. Glad you're here.

Prime Minister Lee. Thank you, Mr. President. I'm very happy to be here to meet the President in the Oval Office. Singapore and America share many common interests and many similar perspectives on the world around us, particularly in Asia. And I've been happy to have a wide exchange of views with the President on how Southeast Asia is developing, what's happening in Asia, how China and India are opening up and becoming influential in the region and exerting a positive influence on many of the countries, and how America can be part of Asia and engage, participating, and continuing to stabilize and to maintain the security in the region, as it has done for many years.

One aspect of security, of course, is antiterror. And I told the President how much we appreciated America's strong, consistent stand on this, that not withstanding any—whatever the terrorists may throw at America, that it will stay firm, and there's absolute confidence that it will not waver, whether in Iraq or anywhere else in the world.

It's critical to us because, for us, antiterror is also a hot agenda item. So it's one of the areas of mutual interest which has lead our two countries to embark

upon a strategic framework agreement which will set out the basis for us to broaden and deepen the cooperation which we already have had over these many years. And I'm very happy that today we'll have the chance to sign that agreement.

President Bush. Thank you, sir.

We'll answer a question a piece. Deb [Deb Riechmann, Associated Press].

Upcoming Supreme Court Nomination

Q. Mr. President, you had a meeting this morning with four leading Senators. How much more input do you need before you'll be able to make a decision on this? And you know, how close are you?

President Bush. Closer today than I was yesterday. [*Laughter*] I did have a good breakfast with four United States Senators, the leaders of the Senate plus the heads of the Judiciary Committee. I asked their advice on a couple of matters. One, I asked their advice on the timing of a nominee. In other words, how fast could they get to the—to the hearings necessary for a nominee's name to move forward. Obviously, we're in a very interesting period here, where you've got the end of the session coming up; then you've got an August break. So I was just trying to get a sense of their view of the calendar. And I want to thank them for being forthright.

Obviously, they get to decide. They're the legislative branch; they get to determine how fast to move a nominee's name or not. My only question to them is: What will it take to be able to get a person confirmed by early October?

Secondly, we talked in general about a potential nominee. They've got strong opinions, and I wanted to hear them. And they've shared some opinions with me. And of course, they're sharing—many Senators are sharing their opinions with others on my staff. We're actively seeking recommendations.

I am going to be deliberate in the process because I want the American people to know that when I finally make a decision, it's going to be one based upon a lot of research and a lot of thought about the character of the person, the integrity of the person, the ability of the person to do the job, and the philosophy of the person. And as you know, I campaigned twice for President of the United States, and I said, "If I have a chance to name somebody to the Supreme Court or courts in general, I'll pick people who will use the bench—will interpret the Constitution while on the bench but not use the bench to legislate." We've got a legislative body called the U.S. House of Representatives and the Senate. They do the legislation. And the courts will then interpret the Constitution as to whether or not the laws are constitutional or not.

And so that's where we are in the process. It's a——

Q. Do you agree with your wife about her desire for you to name a woman?

President Bush. My wife? Listen, I talked to her yesterday. She's in Africa on a mission of good will. She's talking about women's education and HIV/AIDS. Listen, I get her advice all the time. I didn't realize she'd put this advice in the press. That's—[*laughter*]. She did? Well, good. I'm definitely considering—we're definitely considering people from all walks of life, and I can't wait to hear her advice in person when she gets back. [*Laughter*]

Go ahead.

Strategic Framework Agreement

Q. Can we ask some questions on Singapore? What's the significance of the agreement that's going to be signed from Singapore's perspective and from the United States' perspective?

Prime Minister Lee. Well, from our perspective, it builds on a very sound relationship and broadens and deepens it further. It enables us to focus more on antiterrorism, on anti-WMD proliferation, as well as on other aspects of our relationship, defense technology cooperation, military cooperation between our armed forces, and strategic and security exchanges.

President Bush. From our perspective, it is a—it is a statement about how important our relations with Singapore is. We've made a statement before on economic relations when we signed a free trade agreement. And that was an important agreement. It's important for our economy. It's important for the economy of Singapore. This agreement takes our relationship beyond just economics. It's a strategic relationship. It is one that will have long-term consequences for both our peoples. But I happen to believe that it'll have long-term consequences for peace in the region, and that's very important.

This is a relationship based upon mutual trust, shared values, but it's also a relationship that recognizes that we have an active role to play, both countries have an active role to play, in laying the foundations for peace in the region of the world that—in the Far East. And it's an important region.

One of the points that the Prime Minister has made to me, and he keeps reminding me that our involvement in the Far East is very important. And we will stay involved in a constructive way. And this agreement is a constructive agreement. It's a constructive way to stay involved.

Thank you all for coming.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:50 a.m. in the Oval Office at the White House.

Joint Statement by President George W. Bush and Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong of Singapore
July 12, 2005

President George W. Bush and Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong reaffirm the strong U.S.-Singapore partnership and will open a new chapter in strategic cooperation by signing the "Strategic Framework Agreement Between the United States of America and the Republic of Singapore for a Closer Cooperation Partnership in Defense and Security."

The Agreement is a natural step in the expansion of bilateral ties. President Bush and then-Prime Minister Goh Chok Tong first announced their intention to conclude this agreement in October 2003. It was born out of a shared desire to address common threats such as terrorism and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMD), which called for even closer cooperation between the United States and Singapore. The Agreement recognizes Singapore's role as a Major Security Cooperation Partner and will expand the scope of current cooperation in areas such as counterterrorism, counter-proliferation, joint military exercises and training, policy dialogues, and defense technology. The Agreement will further enhance regional stability by supporting the continued security presence of the United States in Southeast Asia.

The President and Prime Minister agree that the U.S. presence in the region has promoted peace and stability, which are crucial for regional cooperation and economic development. The President and Prime Minister instruct their senior officials to meet to continue close coordination on strategic issues in the period leading up to their next bilateral meeting.

The President and the Prime Minister acknowledge progress in the war on terror. The Prime Minister commends the President for the United States' resolute and steadfast stance in the war on terror and expresses Singapore's continued support in this endeavour.

The two leaders welcome the successful election of the first Iraqi National Assembly. President Bush expresses appreciation for Singapore's contributions to Iraq's reconstruction and stabilization. He commends the professionalism of the Singapore Armed Forces personnel who have been deployed in support of Iraq operations over the past two years and of the Singapore Police Force, which has provided critically important training.

The President and Prime Minister express optimism about the outlook in Southeast Asia. They welcome successful elections, the strengthening of democratic institutions, and renewed economic growth in the region and agree that these trends should be encouraged. The two leaders note the progress countries in the region have made in disabling terrorist networks through enhanced cooperation among ASEAN nations and with the international community. The President and Prime Minister condemn the terrorist attacks in London and call on governments around the world to fight terrorism together. They agree that a sustained, long-term effort is needed to defeat terrorism and reaffirm their commitment to continue working closely on law enforcement, non-proliferation, and other appropriate measures to address all aspects of the war on terror.

The President and Prime Minister express satisfaction with the seamless cooperation between the United States and Singapore in responding to the humanitarian disaster caused by the tsunamis in the Indian Ocean. The two leaders note the increasing importance of the Regional Emerging Diseases Intervention (REDI) Centre in light of growing concern over transnational-public-health threats such as SARS and avian influenza. They also note the importance of the Straits of Malacca, and President Bush pledges U.S. support for the region's initiatives for maritime security.

The President and Prime Minister welcome the successful implementation of the U.S.-Singapore Free Trade Agreement and the growth in bilateral trade since it became effective on January 1, 2004. They express satisfaction with growing commercial ties between our two countries and are confident that trade and investment relations will continue to expand.

The President and Prime Minister pledge to sustain the close cooperation between the United States and Singapore in key regional and global multilateral institutions. The President reaffirms U.S. support for ASEAN and the ASEAN Regional Forum. The two leaders note the central role of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) forum in supporting trade and investment liberalization and in promoting cooperative efforts to strengthen regional security. With the forthcoming first Meeting of the East Asia Summit in Kuala Lumpur in December 2005, they agree that the future development of cooperation among countries in the region should be open, transparent, and inclusive. The President and Prime Minister reaffirm the warm and strong ties between the United States and Singapore, which are grounded in historical cooperation, common interests, and shared strategic perspectives.

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

Remarks Honoring NCAA Championship Teams
July 12, 2005

Thank you all. Please be seated. Not you.* Welcome to the South Lawn of the White House for championship day. Today we have the largest group of NCAA champs ever gathered at the White House, and we want to thank you all for coming. I am honored to be joined on stage by the captains of the 15 teams that we're honoring today. Thank you all for being here. Congratulations for being such strong leaders.

I appreciate the Members of Congress who have come today. Welcome. We're proud you're here. I want to thank the coaches and athletic directors who are here today. But most of all, I want to congratulate the men and women who have conducted themselves in the field of play in such a manner that they're called champions. Welcome.

UCLA has won more NCAA championships than any school in the Nation, so it's fitting that three of the champs here today wear the uniform of the Bruins. Back in December, the UCLA men's water polo team won the national championship with an overtime victory against Stanford. Congratulations, and welcome. This spring the UCLA women's water polo team beat Stanford to win the national championship. Welcome to the UCLA women's polo team. And finally, the UCLA men's team won the national championship. I had an honor to meet all three teams. I'm glad you're here. Thanks for coming. Congratulations on a job well done.

And then we have the Georgia Bulldogs, who are well represented today. [*Applause*] It's the South Lawn. Behave yourselves. [*Laughter*] The Georgia men's golf team posted a wire-to-wire victory at the NCAA champions. In the final round, interestingly enough, all five of Georgia's golfers shot the same score, even par. That's called consistency. The Georgia women's swimming and diving team brought home their fourth NCAA championship. Interestingly enough, the Lady Bulldogs won all five of the relay races. And finally, the Georgia women's gymnastics team is with us today. They started the championship meet seeded number 12 and came out number 1. Congratulations to the teams from Georgia.

Two of the teams here made history by winning their schools' first national championships in their respective sports. The Northwestern's women's lacrosse team posted an undefeated season. Twenty-one straight victories got them here to the White House. Congratulations to you all.

And then the Michigan women's softball team is here today. One of the women asked me if I wanted to hit against her. I said, "I don't think so." [*Laughter*] This will interest you. The first 33 games that the Michigan women's softball team played were on the road. It turns out it's a little chilly in Michigan about softball time. They won 32 of the 33. It was an auspicious beginning to a championship season. Welcome to the Michigan women's team.

Two of the teams here are celebrating a championship for the second year in a row. The Stanford women's tennis team finished with an undefeated season and a repeat national championship. They beat the Texas Longhorns in the finals.

The Minnesota women's hockey team—the Gophers beat Harvard last year to come to the White House; they beat Harvard this year to come to the White House. Congratulations to the mighty Gophers of Minnesota.

The Auburn men's swimming and diving team is celebrating a three-peat. Congratulations. Glad you all are here. Thanks for the Speedo. [*Laughter*] I'm not going to

* The President's remarks were directed to team captains.

wear it—[*laughter*]—in public that is. [*Laughter*]

The Duke women's golf team is here to celebrate the national championship in—they were in 2002. They're back. Coach Brooks of the Duke women's golf team has now won three national championships with the Blue Devils. That ties him with Coach K. Therefore, he shall be known as Coach B—not bad. [*Laughter*]

The Johns Hopkins men's lacrosse team is with us today. And Congressman Elijah Cummings is here to honor them. Johns Hopkins compiled a perfect record and pulled out a 9–8 victory to win the first championship they've had in almost two decades. Congratulations to Johns Hopkins.

The Pepperdine men's volleyball team is with us today. They brought the championship trophy back to Malibu in the first time in more than a decade. I want to thank them for the gift, Surfboard One. [*Laughter*]

And finally, we honor the Oklahoma men's gymnastics team. It's the third national championship they've won in the past 4 years.

It's such an honor to have you all here. I want to thank you for being champs on the field. I want to thank you for being champs off the field. I know you know this, but there's a lot of boys and girls who watch you all to determine what it means to be a champ. You probably don't realize it, but when you're in the field of play, there's a lot of kids wondering what it takes.

And therefore, when you serve your community, you're teaching a kid to read, or when you take the extra time to set a good example, you really are affecting people's lives. See, you have a responsibility as a champ, not only to win contests for your respective schools and set personal goals and achieve them, but I think you have a responsibility as a champ to set a good example. And I've read about the mentoring programs and the hospital work and all the good works that you have done, and I want to thank you for setting such a good example.

Again, welcome to the White House. If you're a junior or a sophomore, work hard and come back. I'll be here to greet you. In the meantime, may God bless you all and your families. Thanks for coming.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:48 a.m. on the South Lawn at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Dan Brooks, head women's golf coach, and Mike Krzyzewski, head men's basketball coach, Duke University.

Memorandum on Delegation of Functions Under Section 9 of the AGOA Acceleration Act of 2004

July 12, 2005

Memorandum for the United States Trade Representative

Subject: Delegation of Functions under Section 9 of the AGOA Acceleration Act of 2004

By the authority vested in me by the Constitution and the laws of the United States of America, including section 301 of title 3, United States Code, I hereby delegate to you the functions and authorities assigned to the President under section 9 of the AGOA Acceleration Act of 2004 (19 U.S.C. 3701 note).

You are authorized and directed to publish this memorandum in the *Federal Register.*

GEORGE W. BUSH

NOTE: This memorandum was not received for publication in the *Federal Register*.

Remarks Following a Cabinet Meeting and an Exchange With Reporters *July 13, 2005*

The President. Thank you all for coming. We have just finished our third Cabinet meeting of the year. I want to thank my Secretaries for being here today, and thank you for the briefing. Today's briefing reminded us about the strength of our economy. We had some good news today. OMB is going to announce that the 2005 deficit is $94 billion less than previously expected. In other words, revenues are coming in greater than anticipated. It's a sign that our economy is strong, and it's a sign that our tax relief plan, our progrowth policies, are working.

I told the Congress and told the country we'd cut the deficit in half by 2009. We're ahead of projections now. In other words, these numbers indicate that we're going to cut the deficit in half faster than the year 2009, so long as Congress holds the line on spending.

And so, my message to the United States Congress is: Let's be wise with the taxpayers' money. My Cabinet is committed to that, and we look forward to working with the appropriators to make sure that they spend your money wisely.

This good news on the deficit and on the budget is coupled with good economic news when it comes to job creation. Our unemployment rate is down to 5 percent. We've created more than 2 million jobs this year. More Americans are working today than ever before in our Nation's history.

Over the next couple of weeks, I look forward to working with Congress to continue progrowth policies. One is getting an energy bill. Secondly is to promote free and fair trade. And the matter at hand is a free trade agreement with our neighborhood and countries in Central America and the Dominican Republic.

Finally, I hope we can continue to press for and pass legal reform. I think it's a very important message to say to our job creators, small-business owners, that we'll have a fair legal system, and Congress has got some legal reform matters pending.

And finally—finally, finally, we want to work with Congress to pass a fiscally responsible highway bill. Again, I want to thank my Cabinet for being here.

I'll be glad to answer a couple of questions. Mark Knoller [CBS Radio], are you with us?

CIA Employee Identity Disclosure Investigation

Q. You bet. Thank you, sir. Can I ask you if you have spoken with your Deputy Chief of Staff Karl Rove about the Valerie Plame matter? And do you think he acted improperly in talking about it with reporters?

The President. Mark, I have instructed every member of my staff to fully cooperate in this investigation. I also will not prejudge the investigation based on media reports. We're in the midst of an ongoing investigation, and I will be more than happy to comment further once the investigation is completed.

Elaine [Elaine Quijano, Cable News Network].

Q. Mr. President, on that front, has Mr. Rove come to you and discussed—when did he discuss the fact that he had conversations with reporters about Valerie Plame? And based on that, do you feel as though it was appropriate in 2003 for your spokesman to say definitively that Karl Rove had nothing to do with the Valerie Plame incident?

The President. Elaine, we're in the midst of an ongoing investigation, and this is a serious investigation. And it is very important for people not to prejudge the investigation based on media reports. And again, I will be more than happy to comment on this matter once the investigation is complete.

Brendan [Brendan Murray, Bloomberg News].

Q. Yes, sir.

The President. Yes, Brendan.

Upcoming Supreme Court Nomination

Q. In your search for a replacement for the Supreme Court, when do you anticipate beginning to interview potential candidates, and do—would you consider candidates that come from outside the court, people that don't have experience as judges?

The President. I—we had a very good meeting yesterday. The Vice President and I met with leaders of the Senate, four Members of the United States Senate, and we talked about a lot of subjects. One of the subjects was that very subject: Would I be willing to consider people who had never been a judge. The answer is, you bet. We're considering all kinds of people—judges, non-judges. You know, Laura gave me some good advice yesterday, which is to consider women, which of course I'm doing. [*Laughter*]

And in terms of the process, we're still consulting with Members of the Senate, and I anticipate continued consultations. And I say "we're consulting," it's just not me. It's members of my staff. We're—we've got a lot of contacts in the Senate on both sides of the Hill—both sides of the aisle, and people are calling in with suggestions. And I encourage them to continue to do so. I'm looking forward to their advice.

Of course, I fully recognize it's my responsibility to come up with a nominee, and I intend to do so in a—you know, in a period of time that will give me time to fully analyze the different candidates and speak to them. I'm not exactly sure when that process will begin, in terms of the interviews. And probably if I knew, I wouldn't tell you. [*Laughter*] And—but the American people can rest assured that I understand the seriousness of this responsibility and that I will name somebody who will bring dignity to the Court, someone who will be able to do the job, and someone who will sit on that bench and interpret the Constitution and not use the bench from which to legislate.

Thank you all very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:52 a.m. in the Cabinet Room at the White House. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of this address.

Remarks at the Indiana Black Expo Corporate Luncheon in Indianapolis, Indiana

July 14, 2005

Thank you all very much. Thanks for the warm welcome. Be seated. It is an honor to be here. Thanks for having me. I can't tell you how thrilled I am to be here with the men and women of the Indiana Black

Expo as you celebrate your 35th anniversary.

You know, I was reading about this organization—it is a—it shows the entrepreneurial spirit deep within the hearts of the founders of this organization and the people who are carrying on the proud tradition. I appreciate the fact that you provide scholarships, support programs that are transforming local communities, and as a result, you're lifting up thousands of citizens. I appreciate the example of leadership you set, and it's my honor to join you. Thanks for having me.

I was proud to be introduced by Governor Mitch Daniels. I knew he'd amount to something one of these days. [*Laughter*] And I'm particularly thrilled to be with his wife, Cheri, the fine first lady of the State of Indiana. Laura sends her love to both you and Mitch. She is, by the way, still on the continent of Africa. She'll be coming home tomorrow. She's probably expecting me to fix the dinner. [*Laughter*] I hope she's not hungry. [*Laughter*]

I want to thank Lieutenant Governor Becky Skillman for being here. I want to thank Congresswoman Julia Carson for being here today. [*Applause*] It looks like they still remember you here, Julia. She was on Air Force One, and I went back to have a visit with her. Now, if you've never had a visit with Julia—[*laughter*]—she's got a lot of wisdom. [*Laughter*] And she's not afraid to speak her mind. She kind of reminds me of my mother. Thanks for being here. Thanks for coming down.

I want to thank the mayor, Bart Peterson, of the city of Indianapolis for joining us today. Mayor Peterson, appreciate you. Thanks for coming.

I thank Arvis Dawson and Joyce Rogers and Jim Cummings for this fantastic invitation to come. And I want to thank you for your leadership. Appreciate you all being here.

They tell me Quinn Buckner is here—somewhere out there. There he is. I appreciate you coming. I'm old enough to remember—[*laughter*]—the good old days in Indiana. [*Laughter*] Thanks for being here, Quinn. I'm honored you're here.

I appreciate the fact that Vernice Williams came out to the airport today. I don't know if you know Vernice or not, but I find it very interesting—her story interesting, and it's a good example for all of us to listen to. Vernice has been a volunteer with Black Expo for 35 years. In other words, once this association got started, she said, "I want to volunteer to help." She's involved with the IBE Youth Corps program, all aimed at helping at-risk youth to achieve academic achievement, to instill in them the desire to excel. In other words, she's a soldier in the army of compassion. And I appreciate the example that Vernice has set. And if you want to serve your State and serve our Nation, help somebody in need.

It's an honor to be here with so many charitable and civic leaders. You see, we share a belief in the founding promises of this Nation, a sense of optimism about our future, the future for all citizens, including African Americans. We believe in the power of the human spirit to lift communities and to change lives. Together, we're working to achieve a great national goal, making our country a place where opportunity and prosperity are within reach for all Americans.

I see an America where all our children are taught the basic skills they need to live up to their God-given potential. I see an America where every citizen owns a stake in the future of our country and where a growing economy creates jobs and opportunity for everyone. I see an America where most troubled neighborhoods become safe places of kinship and community. I see an America where every person of every race has the opportunity to strive for a better future and to take part of the promise of America. That's what I see. And I believe the Government has a role to play in helping people gain the tools they need to build lives of dignity and purpose.

That's at the heart of what I call compassionate conservatism.

To ensure that the promise of America reaches all our citizens, we must begin with education. I don't believe you can succeed in America unless you get a good education. Our Nation took an historic step toward that goal of making sure every child is educated—3 years ago when Republicans and Democrats came together to pass the No Child Left Behind Act. The No Child Left Behind Act is based on this straightforward principle: We'll spend money, but we want to make sure we get results.

See, if you believe certain children can't read and write and can't possibly learn, then you don't care about results. But if you believe every child can read and every child can learn to write and add and subtract, then you want to know, don't you? How can you solve a problem unless you measure? And so as a part of the No Child Left Behind Act, we raised the bar. We raised the standards, and we said to local school districts, "Show us. That's all we want to know. We want to know whether or not a child can read."

And we're making good progress as result of this new way of thinking. This morning the latest scores for the long-term National Assessment of Educational Progress were announced. See, this test is called the Nation's Report Card. It measures student achievement at age 9, 13, and 17, across the country with the same set of standards. In other words, we want to know how students are doing in California, Texas, and Indiana. So we measure on the same set of standards. You see, measurement helps us understand how we're doing. You can't guess when it comes to a child's life. You got to measure.

And the test results were released today. I'm proud to come here to talk about the new results. They're from the first long-term test, by the way, since the passage of the No Child Left Behind Act. Over the last 5 years, American children have made significant gains. Math scores for 13-year-olds have increased by 5 points. Math scores for 9-year-olds have increased by 9 points. And reading scores for 9-year-olds jumped 7 points. America's 13-year-olds have earned the highest math scores ever recorded. Nine-year-olds posted the best scores ever in reading and math.

What I'm telling you is, across America, more children are learning. And the success of young students is setting them on the path to a lifetime of achievement, and we're making big differences in the lives of African Americans. I say "we"—let me get this straight—I'm talking about good teachers and good principals and engaged parents. This is not the Federal Government. It is the people at the local level who are making a huge difference in the lives of their students.

We've had an achievement gap in America, and we need to do something about it. The No Child Left Behind Act is helping to do something about it. See, I refuse to accept this belief that certain people can't learn. I called it the soft bigotry of low expectations. Think about that phrase. It says if you lower the standards, you get lousy results. I believe you need to challenge that soft bigotry of low expectation, and we are. The Nation's Report Card shows that reading scores for African American 9-year-olds have jumped 14 points over the past 5 years. Math scores have jumped 13 points in the same period of time. These are the highest scores ever in the history of the test. The achievement gap is starting to close, and that's good for the future of America.

The gap between white and African American 9-year-olds in reading is the narrowest it's ever been in the history of the 30-year test. These results show that when performance is measured and schools are held accountable, every child can succeed. That's what it shows. And we're making progress toward achieving a dream where every single child in America gets a good education and not one child is left behind.

No Child Left Behind is making a difference in the elementary and middle schools, and I believe we need to expand this process to our high schools. Do you realize that according to the most recent data, only 68 out of every 100 students entering our public high schools make it to graduation 4 years later? That is an unacceptable statistic for America.

See, here's what I think we need to do: I think we need to measure and determine why. You can't solve a problem unless you diagnose the problem. I think we need to measure to make sure we understand what is going wrong and correct the problems early, before it's too late. And I believe the Federal Government has a role in providing money for early intervention for students falling behind. I know we need to do this. We need to make sure a high school diploma is the ticket to success.

Most new jobs in the 21st century are filled by people with at least 2 years of college. Think about that. Most new jobs in America today are filled by people with at least 2 years of college. And so we need to make higher education more affordable. And I proposed to the United States Congress that we reform the student aid system and increase college assistance for low-income students through the Pell grant program. I think we need to increase the maximum award for Pell grants and make them available to students year-round so they can be used for summer school as well.

We'll expand access to community colleges so more Americans can develop the skills and knowledge they need. And to help African American students get a higher education, we have continued to fund Historically Black Colleges and historically black graduate institutions at record levels.

My point to you is that if you're willing to work hard and stay in school, the Federal Government will take your side and help you. To ensure that the promise of America reaches all our citizens, we're working to build an ownership society in which more of our citizens have a personal stake in the future of our country. When you own something, your life is more secure. When you own something, you have more dignity. When you own something, you have greater independence. The more people who own something in America means this country is better off. So we've been working to promote an ownership society. I want more people from all walks of life, including African Americans, to have a chance to own their own business.

You can't expand businessownership unless you have a growing economy, and our economy is growing. It is the fastest growing of any major industrialized nation in the world. Our unemployment rate is down to 5 percent. In the last 12 months, we've created more than 2 million jobs. More Americans are working today than ever before in our Nation's history.

I believe the Federal Government can play a positive role in helping African Americans achieve the goal of owning their own business. Last year, the Small Business Administration increased the number of loans to African American businesses by 28 percent, and we're on track to beat that number this year. We're also working to ensure minority businesses are getting a better chance to compete for Federal contracts. We've provided $8 billion in new market tax credits to boost investment and community development in low-income areas. Because of sound policy and low taxes, by the way, and the hard work of our citizens, we're getting results. African American businessownership is at an alltime high in America today.

We got some interesting ideas on how to build on this progress. We're working on a new initiative to help more African Americans and other minorities become businessowners. My administration is joined with the Urban League, the Business Roundtable, the Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation, and others to create what we call the Urban Entrepreneur Partnership. I think it's a smart idea. This partnership

will develop one-stop economic empowerment centers in many of our Nation's poorest communities. In other words, we're trying to reach out and help people understand what it means to become a small-business owner, through training and access to financing contracts for minority entrepreneurs. And the first pilot center will open next Monday in Kansas City and will serve as a model for the rest of the Nation. I hope Black Expo, in its leadership position, will take a look at these kind of programs. I think you're going to find it really interesting.

Listen, the entrepreneurial spirit is strong in the African American community. It's strong. There's a lot of great business leaders today, and there's a lot of would-be great business leaders tomorrow, just with some help. And what I'm telling you is, through good economic policy and through good social policy, this administration, in working with others, is willing to help. We want more people owning their own business.

And we want more people owning their own homes. I like the idea of homeownership, and I hope you do as well. Three years ago, I set a goal of creating 5.5 million new minority homeowners by the end of this decade. And we're getting results. We've already added 2.3 million new homeowners, minority homeowners, putting us ahead of schedule. Today, nearly half of all African Americans own their own homes, and that's good for our country.

And there's more we can do. We're going to provide downpayment assistance for families, counseling for new homebuyers. I don't know if you've ever seen one of those contracts, but the print's really small. We need to help people. Perhaps a good project for Black Expo is to join with Alphonso Jackson and the Housing of Urban Development to help people understand what's in the print so it doesn't—that small print doesn't frighten them off from becoming a first-time homebuyer.

I believe we ought to have tax credits to encourage construction of more affordable housing in low-income areas. See, what I want is more and more people from all walks of life, including our African Americans, opening up the door where they live and saying, "Welcome to my home. Welcome to my piece of property."

And I believe that we also got to expand ownership through our retirement system. We got a problem in Social Security. If you've retired, you have nothing to worry about. You're going to get your check. Believe me, there's enough money there for you. It's just for the younger folks coming up, you're going to be paying—you're going to be paying payroll taxes into a system that simply cannot sustain itself. It's going broke. I know some in Washington don't like to hear that. They kind of wish the issue would go away. It's not going away. In my judgment, now is the time to address it. The job of the President is to confront problems, not pass them on to future Presidents or future generations. And we got a problem.

I put some ideas out there. I hope both Republicans and Democrats forget politics for once in Washington, DC, and focus on what's good for the younger folks in America. But I got another idea to make the system work better. I think younger workers ought to be allowed to take some of their own money and set it aside in a personal savings account that they can call their own.

Now, this isn't a new idea. See, this isn't a new idea. I wasn't the one who thought about it. Guess who thought about it first? Members of the United States Congress. See, they get to have their own retirement system, and so do Federal employees. And you can invest some of your own money, if you so choose, in a conservative mix of bonds and stocks, so you get a good rate of return on your money over time. See, it's your money. You get to watch it grow. My idea is this: If this idea is good enough

for Members of the United States Congress, it's good enough for working people all across the United States of America.

To ensure that the promise of America reaches all of our citizens, we must do more to improve the safety of our most troubled neighborhoods. It is difficult for a young person to study and to learn and grow in the midst of violence, addiction, and despair. So we're fighting the scourge of drugs that destroys lives and wounds families and tears our community apart. We're aggressively prosecuting drug dealers and gun criminals. We're after them. You expect us to enforce the law. We're enforcing the law, because we don't believe people should be allowed to commit crimes with guns. And people ought not to be allowed to sell drugs on the streets. And as a result, violent crime is at its lowest point in 30 years.

As we work to combat crime and keep our streets safe, we must ensure our criminal justice system is fair and effective. Americans of all races and backgrounds must be able to trust the legal system. They must be able to trust it so that no person is held to account for a crime he or she did not commit. We're dramatically expanding the use of DNA evidence to prevent wrongful conviction. See, progress for African Americans and, for that matter, all Americans depends on the full protection of civil rights and equality under the law.

To ensure that the promise of America reaches all our citizens, we must encourage those who are healing our neighborhoods with good works. We must stand with people of faith, not stand against them at the Government level. See, Government can hand out money, but it cannot put hope in a person's heart or a sense of purpose in a person's life. That happens when somebody puts an arm around somebody and says, "I love you. What can I do to help you? How can I be a part of making your life a better way?"

See, the Nation's faith-based and community groups bring kindness and acts of charity to harsh places across America. I call these folks the social entrepreneurs of America. They're trying to figure out ways to listen to that universal call to love a neighbor just like you'd like to be loved yourself and help heal the broken heart. And oftentimes, those programs are a heck of a lot more effective than Government programs. And therefore, it seems like to me that instead of just applauding the leaders, we got to support the leaders. And one of the most important initiatives that I put out is to say to faith-based programs, "You can access Federal money. You have the right to be able to apply for grants without having to take the cross off the wall or the Star of David off your wall. You can interface with Government without losing your mission."

And we're making a difference. We're getting results. Last year, we awarded $2 billion in competitive grants to faith-based institutions that are transforming our Nation and our neighborhoods one heart and one soul at a time.

Let me give you an example of what I'm talking about. Here in Indianapolis, the Zion Tabernacle Apostolic Church is reaching out to neighbors and helping lift up their communities. A social entrepreneur, a leader of the effort is Bishop Farris, who is with us today. Let me tell you what the Bishop has in mind and how he's going to be helped by the Federal Government. Secretary Alphonso Jackson, by the way, is a believer when it comes to the faith-based and community-based initiative. And so the Department of Housing and Urban Development has entered into a collaborative effort with his church, and they plan to break ground in October on 49 housing units for low-income elderly. And their new development will provide residents with shuttle services to stores and counseling and doctor appointments.

I think this is a good use of taxpayers' money. I think it's a good way to say, we're going to try to help improve people's lives. And the delivery systems don't have to be

Government. They can be people of compassion, people who have heard the call, people who want to make somebody's life better. So I want to thank you, Bishop, for doing what you're doing. And by the way, there's thousands of examples just like the Bishop's all across the country.

As we ensure that America's promise reaches all our citizens, we're defending the freedom that makes this progress possible. Our foreign policy is tough, and it is compassionate. The bombings in London last week are a grim reminder that free nations face dangerous enemies who hate our freedom and who'll kill in cold blood. We're on the offense against these terrorists overseas. We will bring them to justice so they don't murder more of our citizens and other citizens around the world.

And as we hunt down the terrorists, we're offering an alternative to their hateful ideology. You see, we're spreading freedom and hope to millions. Because we acted, more than 50 million people—50 million—in Iraq and Afghanistan now live in freedom. And across the broader Middle East, many are claiming their liberty as well. By spreading freedom in a troubled region, we're making this country more secure. We're laying the foundation of peace for generations to come. I believe that freedom is not America's gift to the world; it is the Almighty God's gift to each man and woman in this world.

I believe that human rights are not determined by race or nationality or diminished by distance. As Americans are moved to action—we are moved to action when we see millions in Africa who are facing famine or dying of malaria or the AIDS pandemic. Last year, the United States of America provided nearly 60 percent of the global food aid to the continent of Africa. We're supporting an aggressive campaign to cut the mortality rate of malaria in half.

We're taking the lead when it comes to compassion around the world. And since 2003, the United States of America has led the world. We've undertaken an historic initiative to help the nations of Africa combat HIV/AIDS. So far, thanks to the leadership of a former Hoosier, Randy Tobias, we have delivered lifesaving treatment to more than 230,000 people on the continent of Africa, and there's more work to be done.

We seek progress in Africa because our conscience demands it and because we have an interest in the long-term stability of the continent. Instability and lawlessness in any distant country can bring danger to our own shores. That's the lesson that we're learning in the 21st century. The United States of America will help Africa's leaders bring democracy and prosperity and hope, and this will bring security to our country and peace to the world.

Today, we live in the most hopeful time in human history. These are exciting times. The hope of liberty is spreading across the world. Just watch what's happening. And the hope and opportunity is spreading across our country as well. We will continue to work for the day when the blessings of freedom reach everybody who lives in this country.

The reason I've come today is because your work shows the dignity and equality and potential of every person. I'm here to herald the good works of good people of good heart. You've inspired Americans with your commitment to serve us in education and opportunity. You're helping to unite people of all races. I'm proud of your work. May God continue to bless your families, and may God continue to bless our great Nation.

Thanks for letting me come.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:51 a.m. at the RCA Dome. In his remarks, he referred to Gov. Mitch Daniels of Indiana and his wife, Cheri; Lt. Gov. Becky Skillman of Indiana; Arvis Dawson, chairman of the board of directors, Joyce Rogers, chief executive officer and president, and James C. Cummings, cofounder and former president, Indiana

Black Expo, Inc.; Quinn Buckner, vice president of communications, National Basketball Association's Indiana Pacers; and Joseph D. Farris, pastor, Zion Tabernacle Apostolic Faith Church.

Letter to the Speaker of the House of Representatives Transmitting a Budget Amendment for the Department of Veterans Affairs
July 14, 2005

Dear Mr. Speaker:

My Administration is committed to ensuring that our Nation's veterans continue to receive timely and high-quality health care. To this end, I ask the Congress to consider the enclosed $1.977 billion FY 2006 budget amendment for the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA). I am requesting these resources to cover the expected increased costs in FY 2006 that VA will experience in its medical care budget.

The details of this proposal are set forth in the enclosed letter from the Director of the Office of Management and Budget.

Sincerely,

GEORGE W. BUSH

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

Message to the Congress Transmitting a Report on Reform of the Palestinian Security Services and Palestinian Authority
July 14, 2005

To the Congress of the United States:

Consistent with section 2106 of the Emergency Supplemental Appropriations Act for Defense, the Global War on Terror, and Tsunami Relief, 2005 (Public Law 109–13), and in order to keep the Congress fully informed, I herewith submit the enclosed report prepared by my Administration providing information on matters relating to the Palestinian Security Services and Palestinian Authority reform.

GEORGE W. BUSH

The White House,
July 14, 2005.

Remarks on the Dominican Republic-Central America-United States Free Trade Agreement in Dallas, North Carolina
July 15, 2005

Thank you. Please be seated. Thanks for the warm welcome. It's great to be back in North Carolina. It's always good to get outside the beltway and into NASCAR country. [*Laughter*]

Laura called me—she was in Africa for the past week. She called me. She's fixing

to arrive in Washington this evening, but yesterday she said, "Where are you going on Friday?" I said, "I'm going to North Carolina." I said, "I'll be down there in that area where the Lowe's Motor Speedway is." She said, "Don't get any ideas." [*Laughter*] "You're having enough trouble staying on your mountain bike." [*Laughter*] She sends her very best to you all. She's doing great. I'm a lucky man when she said yes, when I asked her to marry me.

I appreciate the chance to stand with some of the finest workers in America, the men and women of Stowe Mills. I appreciate you all being here. And I thank you for giving me the chance to come and discuss an important topic, and that is, how do we make sure our job creation continues. And one way to do so is to make sure the trade we have is fair trade. That's what I'm here to talk about. I'm here to talk about making sure that people treat us the way we treat them. I want to talk to you about what they call CAFTA, the Central American Free Trade Agreement.

CAFTA is important for job creation. It's important for your jobs. CAFTA is important to help secure the democracies in our own neighborhood. And so, for the sake of our economic security and for the sake of national security, the United States House of Representatives should follow the lead of the United States Senate and pass CAFTA and get that bill to my desk.

I appreciate our Secretary of Commerce, Carlos Gutierrez, flying with me today. You know, I love America. I love the fact that people—a person like Carlos, born in Cuba, worked hard all his life, was able to succeed and is now sitting in the Cabinet with the President. What a fantastic country we have, where opportunity is open to all people.

I want to thank Congresswoman Sue Myrick for her leadership, for her strength of character, for working hard on textile customs enforcement activity. She has been a leader in making sure the North Carolina and the United States textile industry is treated fairly. I appreciate you, Sue.

You've got two fine United States Senators from North Carolina—that would be Senator Dole and Senator Burr. I enjoy working with them, and I appreciate both Members of the United States Senate from North Carolina voting for the CAFTA agreement. They understand this is good for working people here in this State.

I want to thank Dr. Pat Skinner, the president of Gaston College. Thanks for having me. I am a big believer in the community college system. I think—and I appreciate the good work the community college system does here in North Carolina. This isn't the first time I have ever been to a community college in your State. I've been to a lot of community colleges. And one reason why is because your State is on the leading edge of helping people find new skills, the skills necessary for the jobs of the 21st century. And this is a good place and an important place. And so, Dr. Skinner, thanks for having me.

I want to thank the Stowe boys—[*laughter*]—that would be Robert, Harding, and Richmond. Now, I don't know which one of you all is the boss, but I'm interested in figuring out how you figured out who was the boss. I've got a lot of brothers, myself. [*Laughter*] But I appreciate their entrepreneurial spirit. I thank you for having me. I know they care a lot about the people who work in their mills. And they're—I would call them "employee-friendly." They're people who care about the people who work with them. And so I want to thank them for coming. Thanks for letting me go by the plant.

I want to thank the mayor, Rick Coleman, of the town of Dallas. That would be Dallas, North Carolina. [*Laughter*] And I want to thank Mayor Billy Joye of Belmont. Where's Billy? Billy, you here? Billy, yes. See, Billy, they don't know our connection, do they? Billy and I flew F–102s at Ellington Air Force Base in Houston, Texas. Thank you, Billy. As we used to

say, "He was a heck of a stick"—[*laughter*]—which means you're probably a heck of a mayor, Billy. Thanks for coming. Appreciate you being here.

I want to thank Allen Gant, chairman of the National—I'm not talking State—I'm talking National Council of Textile Organizations. He's here because the National Council of Textile Organizations has analyzed the CAFTA legislation and realized that this piece of legislation is good for American textile industry. And so I want to thank you for coming, Allen.

And finally, I flew down on the airplane today with one heck of an entrepreneur, somebody who has made Carolina a place of business interest, and he tells me he's slowly but surely falling in love with Charlotte, and that is Bob Johnson, head of the Charlotte Bobcats NBA basketball team. Thank you for coming, Bob. How about that story—from being raised in Mississippi to getting a good education to building his own business and now the owner of a sports team that means a lot to the people. And by the way, I think he's pretty wise. He drafted—or his club drafted, I'm sure at his insistence, two University of North Carolina Tarheels.

I met Janice Bozardt at Air Force One. She is a volunteer at Moore's Chapel United Methodist Church in Charlotte. She's been volunteering for 40 years. She leads a team of volunteers that delivers meals to families within the church and the local community. The reason I bring up Janice is because I want to remind you all that the strength of the United States of America lies in the hearts and souls of our citizens, that if you really want to—if you analyze our country to determine our greatest strength, you'll find that it exists because people hear a universal call to love a neighbor just like they'd like to be loved themselves and take time out of their lives to volunteer. Janice represents millions of people across the United States of America who are helping to change our country, one heart and one soul and one conscience at a time.

For those of you who might be listening and are interesting in serving our country, find somebody who hurts and surround them with love. Feed the hungry. Find shelter for the homeless. Teach a child to read. Love somebody like you'd like to be loved yourself, and you'll be making a significant contribution to our country. Janice, thank you for coming. Thanks for volunteering.

My most solemn obligation is to protect the American people. That's my most important duty as your President. Today, we are fighting in a global war on terror. We didn't ask for it. It came to our shores, and we're responding. We're doing our duty to not only protect our country but to put the conditions in place that will protect generations from—come. We're fighting against people who celebrate the suffering of the innocent.

I thought it was really interesting that the terrorists chose to attack in London, England, at the same time that the United States and other nations were trying to figure out how to help alleve [alleviate] * HIV/AIDS on the continent of Africa or how to help people that are starving to death or how to help make sure young girls get educated around the world.

We were talking about a society of compassion. And these killers killed indiscriminately, men and women. They didn't care who they were. They didn't care about their religion. They murdered in the name of a totalitarian ideology. These are ideologues. They hate freedom. They reject tolerance. They despise all dissent. They have objectives. Their aim is to remake the Middle East in their own grim image of tyranny. They want to topple governments. They want to export terror. They want to force free nations to retreat.

These people will not be stopped by negotiations. They're not going to be—they

* White House correction.

won't change their mind because of concessions. There is no appeal to their reason. There is only one course of action. We will take the fight to the enemy, and we will stay in the fight until this enemy is defeated. [*Applause*] Thank you all.

We have a comprehensive strategy in place. First, we're doing a lot to protect the homeland. There's a lot of really good folks at the State, local, and Federal level who are working long hours to protect us. We're improving our intelligence gathering, and the only way to deal with and find people that are willing to hide in caves or in the shadows of our cities is to have as good of intelligence as possible. So intelligence sharing within our Government is getting better, and intelligence sharing with other governments is getting better.

And we're going to stay on the offense. And we can do all we can to protect the homeland. As I like to tell people, we have to be right 100 percent of the time, and they've got to be right once. And so therefore, you do everything you can to protect the home, but you stay on the offense against them, and you stay on the hunt. And you call people to account, free nations to account, say, "Join us in this cause of protecting ourselves."

And we are on the hunt. And we've helped change societies for the better. Iraq is a central part of this war on terror. People are heading into Iraq to try to defeat us. They can't win, militarily. The only thing they can do is to try to shake our will, is to murder in such horrific terms—like killing all those kids the other day—that the United States will say, "Well, you know, let's get out of there," before we complete our mission. They're going to fail. They don't understand the United States of America. We will not be driven out of Iraq by a bunch of thugs and assassins. We will complete the mission.

And our mission—just like in Afghanistan, our mission is to help a democracy flourish. This August you'll see the Iraqis write a constitution. And then they'll ratify the constitution. And then there will be elections for a permanent government in December. See, democracy is taking hold. A lot of people said it couldn't happen. A lot of people said, "There's no way democracy is going to take place in a place like Iraq." But the Iraqis defied the cynics, didn't they? Given a chance to vote, millions showed up to the polls. Millions defied the suiciders.

It just reminds me how universal the fuel of freedom is. See, I don't believe—I do not believe that freedom is America's gift to the world. I believe that freedom is the Almighty God's gift to each man and woman in this world, and if given a chance, people choose freedom over tyranny, hope over despair.

The second part of our mission is to train these Iraqi troops so they can do the fighting. The way I put it is this: As the Iraqis stand up, America will stand down. I know a lot of you have got relatives—who've had a loved one in Iraq. And I want to thank you on behalf of a grateful nation. You thank them on behalf of our Nation too. The American people are standing with our troops, and our troops understand what they're doing in Iraq. They're helping lay what I call the foundation of peace, because in the long run, the long run, the best way to secure the peace for generations to come is to spread freedom, and that's exactly the policy of this Government.

Here at home, we've got reason to be optimistic. This economy of ours is growing faster than any other major industrialized nation in the world. We've now had 25 consecutive months of job gains. We've recovered from the shocks of the attack and the recession and the market correction. Our unemployment rate in the United States of America is now 5 percent. That's the lowest since September of 2001, and that's lower than the average rate of the 1970s, the 1980s, and the 1990s. More Americans are working today than ever before in our Nation's history.

That's good progress. But there's more we can do. We've got to keep your taxes low. If you want to keep this economy growing, we've got to make sure that the Government doesn't run up your taxes. We've got to make sure we're wise about how we're spending your money. I don't know if you noticed the news the other day, but it turns out that when you cut taxes, the economy grows. When the economy grows, it yields more tax revenues. Over the past 5 months, the revenues have increased $94 billion greater than anticipated, which means our deficit will be $94 billion less, so long as Congress is wise about how they spend your money. And part of my job is to make sure they are wise about how we spend your money.

This economy is strong. And so the fundamental question is, what do we do to make it stronger? And that's why I'm here to talk about the Central American-Dominican Republican Free Trade Agreement. See, I think this presents us with an historic opportunity to keep this economy growing, and I'll tell you why.

First, Central American businesses and farmers can ship most of their products to America without paying any tariffs. In other words, over the past years, the Congress has decided to say, "Okay, if you grow something or make something in a Central American country, you can ship it to America duty-free." But guess what? We don't have the same rights. We can't do the same thing. We can't grow or manufacture many goods here in the United States and ship our goods to their countries duty-free. That doesn't make any sense to me. That's what I would call a—not a level playing field.

See, I told the people when I was running, "I am for free trade, but I'm also for a level playing field." And so I took a look, as did Members of the Senate and now Members of the House, at the playing field. It's not level. It's not fair to say to a farmer here in North Carolina, "You can't sell what you grow, in Central America duty-free, but they may be able to sell what they grow, here duty-free."

Last year we exported more than $15 billion—$15 billion—of goods to Central America. That's—but products are facing a heavy tariff. That's—in other words, that's what they've done; they've slapped a tax on our goods coming in.

For example, Costa Rica has a 15-percent tax on dump trucks and mobile cranes. If you're a dump truck manufacturer and a worker in a dump truck manufacturing plant, the product you're manufacturing is at a competitive disadvantage because they put a tax on it when it comes into the country.

Guatemala has a 20-percent tax on luggage. El Salvador has a 20-percent tax on polyester fabric. Nicaragua has a 10-percent tax on shrimp. Those are just some of the examples of where there is a barrier to entry. These foreign taxes on American-made products sold in the region hurt businesses, which really means they hurt jobs.

See, it makes it harder to have a job when these countries have tariffs. And yet, we don't have the tariffs in our country. And so one of the things CAFTA would do will eliminate these one-way tariffs on American products and open up a market of 44 million consumers to America's goods, services, and crops. That's what the American people have got to understand.

This deal is a good deal for workers. This basically says, "If you make a good product, it's going to be easier to sell your product to 44 million new customers." By eliminating these tariffs, CAFTA will keep this economy going. CAFTA helps American textile workers by keeping textile jobs in the U.S., and here is how: Central America is the second largest market in the world for our textile products. I don't know if people here in North Carolina know that. Think about what I just said: It is the second largest market for textile products. So if you're a textile worker, it seems like to me that one of the questions you ask, "Where do we sell our products? And if

we sell our products, are we being treated fairly for the products we manufacture?"

Garment factories in Central America buy yarn and fabric. That's how they operate. They buy the yarn and—I just saw some yarn and fabric made. You do a fine job, by the way. And they buy that yarn and fabric. But it's taxed before it gets into the country. In other words, it makes the product made in your plant less competitive with products made in other plants. These Central American factories are competing with Asian garment workers. And Asian—generally, they use Asian materials. See, so Central American companies need to have an incentive to continue to buy our product, and the best way to do it is to get rid of those tariffs on U.S.-made yarn, the yarn right—made in your plant.

If we can get rid of the tariffs, it is more competitive, which makes it more likely that we'll be able to—in our neighborhood—compete with Asian manufacturers. That's why it's a good deal for textile workers. It means the products you produce will be cheaper, less expensive in a part of the world—the second largest place where we—the second largest market for our products. And that means jobs here in America. CAFTA is good for U.S. jobs. CAFTA means textile jobs will stay right here in the United States of America.

In 2004, North Carolina exported more than $1.7 billion worth of manufactured goods to CAFTA nations, most of it textiles and apparel. Without CAFTA, the market for these textiles in Central America would likely disappear and so would thousands of jobs here.

This bill is important for North Carolina. It's important for every State. But it's—see, one of the reasons why we asked the workers to sit up here is because I want people to connect this legislation with jobs. That's what we're talking about, really. People at Stowe Mills understand this. That's why the CEO, Harding Stowe, one of the Stowe boys, and other textile manufacturers are urging Congress to pass CAFTA. That's a pretty interesting observation, isn't it, by people who know the business pretty well. In other words, they've analyzed this piece of legislation. They understand the significance. They understand that when you drop tariffs, it will help increase exports. And when you increase exports, that means more sales, which means more jobs. They know this. These are the people who have a vested interest in this piece of legislation—those are the textile manufacturers. And the textile manufacturers agree with me that the United States House of Representatives, for the good of American workers, ought to pass CAFTA legislation. And I want to thank them for being here today.

Eighty percent—80 percent of U.S. exports of consumer and industrial products will become duty-free—80 percent of what we produce here going down there. CAFTA nations bought a million dollars of American goods, including semiconductors, electronic components from Oregon, petroleum and coal from Texas, plastics from Colorado, cars trucks and autoparts from Michigan. In other words, this bill is going to have effect beyond textiles. It's going to help people who are working in manufacturing facilities all over the country.

The National Association of Manufacturers estimates that the elimination of tariffs on these goods will result in an extra billion dollars worth of U.S. manufactured exports to the region each year. That's a billion dollars more goods going into those markets, which means somebody's more likely to keep a job, or maybe somebody is more likely to find a job. In other words, this is a jobs program we're talking about.

The increase of sales is important all across our country. It provides additional opportunity. And I'm going to tell you something, this bill helps our farmers, and that's important for people to understand. Fortunately, we don't have a national security issue when it comes to agriculture. We produce more than we consume, and I want to thank our farmers for that.

I can't say the same about energy, by the way, which—that means we have a national security problem, when you're importing more energy than you produce. That's why Congress is going to get me an energy bill. I want to warn you, by signing that bill, it's not going to drop your gasoline prices, but it's finally going to put in place a strategy that will help us diversify away from foreign sources of energy, which we need to do.

But if you produce more than you consume, therefore, you've got to figure out ways to sell what you produce to somebody else. In other words, exports are really important for our farm community, and so we ought to be working to open up markets for the farmers. That's how you avoid surplus here at home.

Today, our agriculture trade with CAFTA is nearly $1.8 billion a year. That's a lot. And the American Farm Bureau Federation, they got their economists on this deal. They looked at the CAFTA agreement, and they think it would increase farm exports by additional $1.5 billion a year. If you're selling 1.8 now, and you get rid of those tariffs on your farm products, which means you're more likely to sell more product, and it goes up to 1.5 billion, that's a hefty increase, by signing this agreement. Feed grains and wheat and rice and soybeans and poultry and beef and pork and dairy and fruits and vegetables are all going to benefit from this agreement.

You mentioned—you heard me—you did hear me say pork. [*Laughter*] In North Carolina, the leading farm product is pork. You grow a lot of hogs here. [*Laughter*] And you're good at it; you're really good at it. And you grow more than we eat. Do you realize in CAFTA nations, pork now faces duties as high as 47 percent? If you're a pork producer here in North Carolina and you're looking for a place to sell your product, you want to get rid of that 47 percent tariff. You want to reduce tariffs. You want your product to be able to go into countries duty-free. You want to be treated just like we treat other nations. That's what you want, and the CAFTA bill will do just that. CAFTA is going to be good for American agriculture.

And I happen to be a person who believes that it's important to have a strong agricultural sector. And if it's good for our America agriculture, it's good for America.

I want to tell you something else about CAFTA. It will help advance a key part of our foreign policy. In the seventies and eighties, most of the CAFTA nations suffered under military dictatorships. The region was not stable. There was a lot of turmoil. And then those nations began to embrace freedom and democracy. And so we've got some young democracies right in our own neighborhood. And it's in our interest that those democracies be strong and viable.

But there's still forces that oppose democratic government there and who seek to limit economic freedom. And there are forces in the neighborhood who are hostile to our interests. Now, these small nations of CAFTA—I just met—by the way, met with the President of El Salvador today—they have made a big commitment for CAFTA. They say, "We want to do CAFTA. We'll lower our tariffs."

By the way, it makes sense for them to lower their tariffs. After all, it will help their people. It will mean that North Carolina pork will be less expensive at the stores for somebody trying to feed their family. But they've made this commitment. They said, "We want to stand with America through the CAFTA agreement." And it's really important we pass that agreement to help stabilize those countries.

We got to help the young democracies develop—deliver a better life to their own citizens. That's what this agreement means for them. It means products are less expensive. It means their businesspeople will be more likely to be able to buy plant and equipment at a better price, which will mean more jobs for the people there living in Central America. That's what that means.

It will improve—boost demand for our goods. It will help them reduce poverty. See, as wealth spreads out through the neighborhood, it will help create a vibrant middle class, and that's important. That's important. It will mean somebody is more likely to find a job close to home than trying to sneak into the United States of America to find a job. CAFTA is important foreign policy. It will help stabilize democracies, and it will help our friends grown and prosper, and that's good. That's in our interests that we do just that.

And so I'm calling on the Congress to pass CAFTA. It's a pro-jobs bill. It's a pro-growth bill. It's a pro-democracy bill. We cannot turn our backs on our friends. We cannot say to them, "For pure political reasons, we're not going to support a treaty that will not only help our own businesses, but that will help stabilize young democracies."

And so I want to thank you for giving me a chance to come by and visit with you about an important piece of legislation. I can't tell you what an honor it is to come down to North Carolina, and it's a huge honor to be the President of the United States of America.

May God bless you, and may God bless our people.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:01 p.m. at Gaston College. In his remarks, he referred to Robert L. Stowe III, chairman, D. Harding Stowe, president and chief executive officer, and Richmond H. Stowe, secretary and treasurer, R.L. Stowe Mills, Inc.; Robert L. Johnson, owner and governor, National Basketball Association's Charlotte Bobcats; and President Elias Antonio Saca Gonzalez of El Salvador.

Letter to the Speaker of the House of Representatives Transmitting Budget Amendments

July 15, 2005

Dear Mr. Speaker:

I ask the Congress to consider the enclosed FY 2006 budget amendments for the Departments of Agriculture and Health and Human Services; the Environmental Protection Agency; International Assistance Programs; the National Aeronautics and Space Administration; and the Small Business Administration. In total, these amendments would not increase the discretionary budget authority proposed in my FY 2006 Budget.

The details of these proposals are set forth in the enclosed letter from the Director of the Office of Management and Budget.

Sincerely,

GEORGE W. BUSH

Letter to Congressional Leaders on Review of Title III of the Cuban Liberty and Democratic Solidarity (LIBERTAD) Act of 1996
July 15, 2005

Dear _____ :

Consistent with section 306(c)(2) of the Cuban Liberty and Democratic Solidarity (LIBERTAD) Act of 1996 (Public Law 104–114)(the "Act"), I hereby determine and report to the Congress that suspension for 6 months beyond August 1, 2005, of the right to bring an action under title III of the Act is necessary to the national interests of the United States and will expedite a transition to democracy in Cuba.

Sincerely,

GEORGE W. BUSH

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to Richard G. Lugar, chairman, and Joseph R. Biden, Jr., ranking member, Senate Committee on Foreign Relations; Thad Cochran, chairman, and Robert C. Byrd, ranking member, Senate Committee on Appropriations; Henry J. Hyde, chairman, and Tom Lantos, ranking member, House Committee on International Relations; and Jerry Lewis, chairman, and David R. Obey, ranking member, House Committee on Appropriations.

The President's Radio Address
July 16, 2005

Good morning. Under the Constitution, I have the responsibility to nominate a successor to Supreme Court Justice Sandra Day O'Connor. This past week, I met with Democratic and Republican leaders in the United States Senate and sought their views on the process and their thoughts on the qualities to look for in a potential nominee. Also, my staff has talked with more than 60 Members of the United States Senate. Members of the Senate are receiving a full opportunity to provide their opinions and recommendations, and I appreciate their advice.

I will be guided by clear principles as I make my decision. My nominee will be a fair-minded individual who represents the mainstream of American law and American values. The nominee will meet the highest standards of intellect, character, and ability, and will pledge to faithfully interpret the Constitution and laws of our country. Our Nation deserves, and I will select, a Supreme Court Justice that Americans can be proud of.

The American people also expect a Senate confirmation process that rises above partisanship. When I met with Senate leaders, we discussed our shared goal of making sure that the confirmation process is dignified. The nominee deserves fair treatment, a fair hearing, and a fair vote. I will make my nomination in a timely manner so the nominee can be confirmed before the start of the Court's new term in October.

The experiences of the two Justices nominated by President Clinton provide useful examples of fair treatment and a reasonable timetable for Senate action. In 1993, the Senate voted on and confirmed Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg to the Supreme Court 42 days after President Clinton submitted her nomination. And despite the significant philosophical differences many Senators had with Justice Ginsburg, she received 96 votes in favor of confirmation.

The following year, Justice Stephen Breyer was confirmed 73 days after his nomination was submitted, with 87 votes in his favor. Again, Republican Senators, in large numbers, voted for confirmation of Justice Breyer despite significant philosophical differences. These examples show that the thorough consideration of a nominee does not require months of delay.

As we continue the process to fill the opening on the Supreme Court, we are also moving forward on other important priorities for the American people. This past week, we received more good news on the economy. The 2005 deficit is projected to be $94 billion less than previously expected. I told the Congress and the country we would cut the deficit in half by 2009. This week's numbers show that we are ahead of pace, so long as Congress acts wisely with taxpayer dollars.

This good news on the budget is coupled with other news that shows the economy is strong and getting stronger. Our economy is growing faster than any other major industrialized nation. The unemployment rate is down to 5 percent, lower than the average rate of the 1970s, 1980s, and 1990s. We have created more than 2 million jobs in the past 12 months. More Americans are working today than ever before in our Nation's history, and homeownership in America is at an alltime high.

To keep our economy growing and creating jobs, Congress needs to continue working in the upcoming weeks on our progrowth economic agenda. First, for the sake of our economic security and our national security, the Congress must complete its work on a good energy bill that will reduce our dependence on foreign sources of energy.

Second, the House needs to follow the Senate's lead by approving the Central American and Dominican Republic Free Trade Agreement. By lowering trade barriers for our exports, this agreement will level the playing field for America's goods, services, and crops, and help create jobs for American workers.

Third, Congress needs to send me a fiscally responsible highway bill that modernizes roads and bridges, improves safety, and opens up new job opportunities.

Finally, Congress needs to move forward with Social Security reform. For those of you who were born before 1950, Social Security will not change. But the system has made promises to our younger workers that it cannot pay for, and the cost of fixing the system grows higher with every year we wait. So Congress needs to act now to strengthen Social Security for our children and grandchildren.

The American people expect members of both parties to offer a positive agenda and get things done for our country. By working together in the weeks ahead, I am confident we will achieve positive results for all Americans.

Thank you for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 7:50 a.m. on July 15 in the Cabinet Room at the White House for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on July 16. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on July 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 at a Welcoming Ceremony for Prime Minister Manmohan Singh of India
July 18, 2005

Mr. Prime Minister, Mrs. Kaur, Laura and I are honored to welcome you to the White House.

We meet as leaders of two great democracies committed to working together for a better and a safer world. Your visit reflects the growing bonds of cooperation between your nation and mine. Our nations have ties that are strong and warm. These ties are enriched by hundreds of thousands of Americans of Indian origin who contribute so much to America's vitality. Our people share the bonds of friendship and a commitment to prosperity, peace, and regional stability. Our nations believe in freedom, and our nations are confronting global terrorism.

As diplomatic partners, we're meeting this threat in our own nations and abroad. And as economic partners, we're working around the world to displace hatred and violence with prosperity, hope, and optimism. India's embrace of democracy and human rights has ensured that its great diversity will remain a national strength. And since enacting economic reforms in the early nineties, India has become an emerging economic power to the betterment of its people.

The relationship between our two nations has never been stronger, and it will grow even closer in the days and years to come. This transformed relationship was seen vividly in the response to the December 26th tsunami that devastated parts of Asia. Along with Japan and Australia, our two nations launched a coordinated and effective disaster relief mission, providing assistance and relief where it was most needed.

Mr. Prime Minister, the United States and India have built a relationship of great potential as we face this century's challenges. We look forward to building on our strong bilateral relationship to expand our economic ties and to lay the foundation of peace and prosperity for our children and our grandchildren.

Welcome, Mr. Prime Minister, and thank you for coming.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:11 a.m. on the South Lawn at the White House, where Prime Minister Singh was accorded a formal welcome with full military honors. In his remarks, he referred to Gursharan Kaur, wife of Prime Minister Singh. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of Prime Minister Singh.

The President's News Conference With Prime Minister Monmohan Singh of India
July 18, 2005

President Bush. Thank you. I'm proud to stand here today with Prime Minister Singh, the leader of one of the world's great democracies. Mr. Prime Minister, welcome to America. I applaud your vision, and I applaud your leadership. Laura and I are honored to welcome you and Mrs. Kaur to the White House.

We just had a great discussion, a very frank and open discussion. And tonight we look forward to welcoming you for a little family dinner.

India and the United States share a commitment to freedom and a belief that democracy provides the best path to a more hopeful future for all people. We also believe that the spread of liberty is the best alternative to hatred and violence. Because of our shared values, the relationship between our two countries has never been stronger. We're working together to make our nations more secure, deliver a better life to our citizens, and advance the cause of peace and freedom throughout the world.

The Governments of India and the United States are working together to safeguard our people. We are charting new steps in our defense relationship through the recently signed new framework that will help our two nations work toward common security objectives. We're working together on counterterrorism to help protect our people and make the world a safer place. We're also committed to increasing the prosperity of the people of India and America alike. Today we announced the completion of the next steps in strategic partnership. Completing this partnership will help us further enhance our cooperation in the areas of civil nuclear, civil space, and high technology commerce.

Last month, we launched a reinvigorated U.S.-India economic dialog to focus high-level attention on trade, finance, investment, and the environment. Prime Minister Singh and I are about to meet with business leaders from both our nations who have joined us here today for the inaugural meeting of the CEO Forum. The expertise of these private sector leaders will help our two Governments build trade and increase investment for the good of our peoples. Cleaner energy resources, including nuclear power, are vital for the future of both our economies. We have begun a bilateral energy dialog to find ways to work together in this important area. Our two nations also have a common interest in bettering the lives of people around the world. We are launching a disaster response initiative to better respond to future disasters, just not in Asia but around the world.

I appreciate Prime Minister Singh's leadership. He's a man who's committed to peace and liberty. I look forward to working with you, Prime Minister. I thank you for coming. The podium is yours.

Prime Minister Singh. Thank you very much, Mr. President. Ladies and gentlemen of the press, I would like to begin by thanking President Bush for the warmth of his hospitality and the wide-ranging discussions that we've had this morning with him. These discussions have been, indeed, very productive and focused on the future direction of a transformation in our multifaceted relations.

I am happy that the President and I share the common goal of making this one of the principal relationships for each of our countries. The President's personal commitment to this relationship is deeply admired by the people of India. The support and good will of the friendly people of the United States in managing the transition from a developing country to a fast-expanding economy is something we greatly welcome and greatly appreciate. The President's assurance to me that India's sustained economic growth has his strong support and support of the United States means a lot to us.

The joint statement that we have agreed upon lays out the full potential of our multifaceted cooperation. The President has accepted my invitation to visit India at the earliest, and we are confident that the results of the understanding that we have reached today would be fully evident by then.

Our partnership is one between rigorous and vibrant democracies, and we have agreed today to give expression to our shared values in a variety of ways. The President's steadfast determination and leadership in meeting the challenges of international terrorism is widely appreciated by us, in particular, but all the world, all civilized men and women all over the

world. There can be no cause that justifies the killing of innocent and defenseless civilians. There must be an international norm of zero tolerance for terrorists.

Meeting global challenges requires credible and effective global institutions. Today, the world is debating the reform of the United Nations. In our talks, President and I were of one mind that the contemporary reality must be fully reflected in the central organs and decisionmaking processes of the U.N. India has a compelling case for permanent membership of the Security Council. We are convinced that India can significantly contribute to U.N. decisionmaking and capabilities.

A growing Indian economy, with an accelerated growth rate averaging about 6 to 7 percent in recent years, and its integration with the world economy would expand the scope for commerce, investment, and technological cooperation between our two countries. Shortly after this press interaction, the President and I will spend a few minutes with corporate leaders from both countries of the first meeting of the CEO's Forum. This forum includes some of the best business minds of our two countries. We have announced today a series of other initiatives designed to build a long-term, knowledge-driven partnership between India and the United States. These reflect the vision that the President and I have of our shared future.

We also discussed the importance of ensuring adequate energy and affordable supplies at a time when oil prices remain high. Both of us recognize that civilian nuclear energy has a greater role in meeting global energy demands. We in India have an ambitious and attainable national roadmap in this regard. We look forward to President Bush's strong leadership on this important issues.

I must, once again, thank you, Mr. President, for the warmth of your welcome and for your deep and abiding personal commitment to the building of our partnership.

I would now be glad to take your questions.

President Bush. Hold on a second. The way this is going to work—the way this will work is, I'll call on somebody from the American side, and then the Prime Minister will do so. Then I'll call somebody, and the Prime Minister will do so. We'll answer two questions apiece, starting with Terry [Terence Hunt, Associated Press].

Disclosure of CIA Employee's Identity

Q. Mr. President, you said you don't want to talk about an ongoing investigation, so I'd like to ask you, regardless of whether a crime was committed, do you still intend to fire anyone found to be involved in the CIA leak case? And are you displeased that Karl Rove told a reporter that Ambassador Joe Wilson's wife worked for the Agency on WMD issues?

President Bush. We have a serious ongoing investigation here—[*laughter*]—and it's being played out in the press. And I think it's best that people wait until the investigation is complete before you jump to conclusions. And I will do so as well. I don't know all the facts. I want to know all the facts. The best place for the facts to be done is by somebody who's spending time investigating it. I would like this to end as quickly as possible so we know the facts, and if someone committed a crime, they will no longer work in my administration.

Kashmir

Q. My question is to President Bush. The question relates to the line of control in Kashmir, Mr. President. President Clinton had made clear the U.S. policy that in the interest of peace, the sanctity of the line of control must be maintained by every side.

Would you, Mr. President, like to reaffirm the U.S. stand that the sanctity of the line of control cannot be violated by anyone in future, in the interest of the peace? Mr. President.

President Bush. Well, U.S. policy has not changed. This problem will be solved by India and Pakistan. And our role is to encourage the leaders from both countries to work in good faith to solve this long-standing problem. And I am pleased with the progress being made, as should the people of India. I think the people of India ought to applaud strong leaders that are willing to work to achieve peace. And I think we have an opportunity to help facilitate the dialog on this long-standing issue.

But the truth of the matter is, in order for there to be a solution, the Prime Minister, representing the great people of India, and President Musharraf, representing the people of Pakistan, are going to have to come to a mutually acceptable agreement. To the extent we can help, we're more than willing to try to help. But we're not a party to the agreement, of course. I'm hopeful—I'm hopeful that the progress achieved thus far can be continued. And I applauded the Prime Minister in my private meeting with him for taking a step toward peace.

Adam [Adam Entous, Reuters].

Upcoming Supreme Court Nomination

Q. Thank you.

President Bush. Yes, thanks.

Q. Thank you, Mr. President. We understand you are now close to a decision on a Supreme Court nominee.

President Bush. Really? [*Laughter*] It's amazing how Washington works, Mr. Prime Minister. [*Laughter*]

Q. Have you narrowed down the list and met with finalists? Will you now share the list with Senate leaders to avoid a confirmation battle, as Democrats have proposed?

President Bush. Well, thank you for telling me where I am in the process. I appreciate that. We've consulted with the Senate. We will continue to consult with the Senate. I, of course, am the person that picks the nominee, and they get to decide whether or not the nominee gets confirmed. That's the way it has worked in the past. That's the way it's going to work in this administration.

And of course I'm reviewing a different candidate. I'm reviewing their curriculum vitae, as well as their findings. I will sit down with some and talk to them face to face, those who I have not known already. You know, we've got some people that—perhaps in contention that I've already spent time with, that I know. In other words, I'm familiar with some of the people that are being speculated about in the press. And so I don't need to interview those. But of course I'm going to take a very thorough approach.

What they're referring to is a Supreme Court vacancy. And this is a really important decision. And I'm going to take my time, and I will be thorough and deliberate. But make no mistake, we have heard a lot of suggestions from Members of the United States Senate—a lot. It turns out, many of the Senators have got strong opinions one way or the other, and of course we're listening to them.

But my desire, Adam, is to get this process moving so that someone will be confirmed, whoever he or she is, will be confirmed by October. And if that's the backstop, we're working back to try to accommodate the Senate and their desire. Part of the consultation was to ask the Senators, "What's it take to get somebody in place by the October session?"

And thank you for your question, and thank you for telling me how close I am to—or at least indicating what others think. [*Laughter*]

Nuclear Technology

Q. Mr. Prime Minister, you have sought the removal of restrictions on nuclear and high technology supplies to India. After the meeting with President Bush, how do you see the prospects in this area?

Prime Minister Singh. Well, I think we have had a very constructive and productive meeting. And as you will see from the joint statement, this issue has been addressed

in a manner which gives me great satisfaction. And I thank the President for his personal role and interest in facilitating a solution to this complex problem.

President Bush. Mr. Prime Minister, thank you. Very good job. Well done. Thank you, sir.

NOTE: The President's news conference began at 11:08 a.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Gursharan Kaur, wife of Prime Minister Singh; and President Pervez Musharraf of Pakistan.

Joint Statement by President George W. Bush and Prime Minister Manmohan Singh of India
July 18, 2005

Prime Minister Manmohan Singh and President Bush today declare their resolve to transform the relationship between their countries and establish a global partnership. As leaders of nations committed to the values of human freedom, democracy and rule of law, the new relationship between India and the United States will promote stability, democracy, prosperity and peace throughout the world. It will enhance our ability to work together to provide global leadership in areas of mutual concern and interest.

Building on their common values and interests, the two leaders resolve:

- To create an international environment conducive to promotion of democratic values, and to strengthen democratic practices in societies which wish to become more open and pluralistic.
- To combat terrorism relentlessly. They applaud the active and vigorous counterterrorism cooperation between the two countries and support more international efforts in this direction. Terrorism is a global scourge and the one we will fight everywhere. The two leaders strongly affirm their commitment to the conclusion by September of a UN comprehensive convention against international terrorism.

The Prime Minister's visit coincides with the completion of the Next Steps in Strategic Partnership (NSSP) initiative, launched in January 2004. The two leaders agree that this provides the basis for expanding bilateral activities and commerce in space, civil nuclear energy and dual-use technology.

Drawing on their mutual vision for the U.S.-India relationship, and our joint objectives as strong long-standing democracies, the two leaders agree on the following:

For the Economy

- Revitalize the U.S.-India Economic Dialogue and launch a CEO Forum to harness private sector energy and ideas to deepen the bilateral economic relationship.
- Support and accelerate economic growth in both countries through greater trade, investment, and technology collaboration.
- Promote modernization of India's infrastructure as a prerequisite for the continued growth of the Indian economy. As India enhances its investment climate, opportunities for investment will increase.
- Launch a U.S.-India Knowledge Initiative on Agriculture focused on promoting teaching, research, service and commercial linkages.

For Energy and the Environment

- Strengthen energy security and promote the development of stable and

efficient energy markets in India with a view to ensuring adequate, affordable energy supplies and conscious of the need for sustainable development. These issues will be addressed through the U.S.-India Energy Dialogue.

- Agree on the need to promote the imperatives of development and safeguarding the environment, commit to developing and deploying cleaner, more efficient, affordable, and diversified energy technologies.

For Democracy and Development

- Develop and support, through the new U.S.-India Global Democracy Initiative in countries that seek such assistance, institutions and resources that strengthen the foundations that make democracies credible and effective. India and the U.S. will work together to strengthen democratic practices and capacities and contribute to the new U.N. Democracy Fund.
- Commit to strengthen cooperation and combat HIV/AIDs at a global level through an initiative that mobilizes private sector and government resources, knowledge, and expertise.

For Non-Proliferation and Security

- Express satisfaction at the New Framework for the U.S.-India Defense Relationship as a basis for future cooperation, including in the field of defense technology.
- Commit to play a leading role in international efforts to prevent the proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction. The U.S. welcomed the adoption by India of legislation on WMD (Prevention of Unlawful Activities Bill).
- Launch a new U.S.-India Disaster Relief Initiative that builds on the experience of the Tsunami Core Group, to strengthen cooperation to prepare for and conduct disaster relief operations.

For High-Technology and Space

- Sign a Science and Technology Framework Agreement, building on the U.S.-India High-Technology Cooperation Group (HTCG), to provide for joint research and training, and the establishment of public-private partnerships.
- Build closer ties in space exploration, satellite navigation and launch, and in the commercial space arena through mechanisms such as the U.S.-India Working Group on Civil Space Cooperation.
- Building on the strengthened non-proliferation commitments undertaken in the NSSP, to remove certain Indian organizations from the Department of Commerce's Entity List.

Recognizing the significance of civilian nuclear energy for meeting growing global energy demands in a cleaner and more efficient manner, the two leaders discussed India's plans to develop its civilian nuclear energy program.

President Bush conveyed his appreciation to the Prime Minister over India's strong commitment to preventing WMD proliferation and stated that as a responsible state with advanced nuclear technology, India should acquire the same benefits and advantages as other such states. The President told the Prime Minister that he will work to achieve full civil nuclear energy cooperation with India as it realizes its goals of promoting nuclear power and achieving energy security. The President would also seek agreement from Congress to adjust U.S. laws and policies, and the United States will work with friends and allies to adjust international regimes to enable full civil nuclear energy cooperation and trade with India, including but not limited to expeditious consideration of fuel supplies for safeguarded nuclear reactors at Tarapur. In the meantime, the United States will encourage its partners to also consider this request expeditiously. India has expressed its interest in ITER and a willingness to

contribute. The United States will consult with its partners considering India's participation. The United States will consult with the other participants in the Generation IV International Forum with a view toward India's inclusion.

The Prime Minister conveyed that for his part, India would reciprocally agree that it would be ready to assume the same responsibilities and practices and acquire the same benefits and advantages as other leading countries with advanced nuclear technology, such as the United States. These responsibilities and practices consist of identifying and separating civilian and military nuclear facilities and programs in a phased manner and filing a declaration regarding its civilians facilities with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA); taking a decision to place voluntarily its civilian nuclear facilities under IAEA safeguards; signing and adhering to an Additional Protocol with respect to civilian nuclear facilities; continuing India's unilateral moratorium on nuclear testing; working with the United States for the conclusion of a multilateral Fissile Material Cut Off Treaty; refraining from transfer of enrichment and reprocessing technologies to states that do not have them and supporting international efforts to limit their spread; and ensuring that the necessary steps have been taken to secure nuclear materials and technology through comprehensive export control legislation and through harmonization and adherence to Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR) and Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG) guidelines.

The President welcomed the Prime Minister's assurance. The two leaders agreed to establish a working group to undertake on a phased basis in the months ahead the necessary actions mentioned above to fulfill these commitments. The President and Prime Minister also agreed that they would review this progress when the President visits India in 2006.

The two leaders also reiterated their commitment that their countries would play a leading role in international efforts to prevent the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, including nuclear, chemical, biological and radiological weapons.

In light of this closer relationship, and the recognition of India's growing role in enhancing regional and global security, the Prime Minister and the President agree that international institutions must fully reflect changes in the global scenario that have taken place since 1945. The President reiterated his view that international institutions are going to have to adapt to reflect India's central and growing role. The two leaders state their expectations that India and the United States will strengthen their cooperation in global forums.

Prime Minister Manmohan Singh thanks President Bush for the warmth of his reception and the generosity of his hospitality. He extends an invitation to President Bush to visit India at his convenience and the President accepts that invitation.

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

Remarks at a State Dinner Honoring Prime Minister Manmohan Singh of India

July 18, 2005

Mr. Prime Minister, Mrs. Kaur, Laura and I are honored to welcome you to the White House. It is a great privilege to have

you here, along with our distinguished guests tonight.

India and the United States are separated by half the globe. Yet today, our two nations are closer than ever before. The ties that bind us are enriched by the hundreds of thousands of Americans of Indian origin. These citizens contribute a lot to America's vitality. Today, these Americans are leaders in their professions in business and science, in space exploration and technology, and in many other fields. And the United States is a better place because of the thousands of students who come here from India to study in our universities.

Today, our two nations are bound by our common interests. Our trading partnership has grown dramatically in recent years, which brings greater prosperity and opportunity to citizens of both our countries. America and India also understand the danger of global terrorism, which has brought grief to our nations and united us in our desire to bring peace and security to the world.

Above all, India and the United States are bound together by common values. As two strong, diverse democracies, we share a commitment to the success of multiethnic democracy, individual liberty, and the rule of law. And we believe that by spreading the blessings of democracy and freedom, we will ensure lasting peace for our own citizens and for the world.

Last year, Mr. Prime Minister, you said that the best is yet to come in the relationship between India and the United States. The good meetings we have had today demonstrate your foresight. America looks forward to working even more closely with India in the coming years to spread prosperity and freedom and peace.

And so tonight, Mr. Prime Minister, as we celebrate the friendship of our two nations, I offer a toast to you, to your gracious wife, and to the great people of India.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8:07 p.m. in the State Dining Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Gursharan Kaur, wife of Prime Minister Singh. The transcript made available by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of Prime Minister Singh.

Videotaped Remarks to the African Growth and Opportunity Act Forum
June 30, 2005

On behalf of America, I send greetings to the people of all the African nations represented at the AGOA Forum. I am grateful to all of you who have traveled far to discuss our shared vision for an Africa that is home to democracy, prosperity, and opportunity.

This is a hopeful moment in the history of Africa. The governments of many African nations are being transformed. Many African economies are vibrant and growing. In Sub-Saharan Africa as a whole, economic growth is now at its highest level in 8 years.

An important part of Africa's rising prosperity is the African Growth and Opportunity Act or AGOA. This wise legislation is reducing barriers to trade, increasing exports, creating jobs, and expanding opportunity for Africans and Americans alike.

AGOA is getting results. Political reforms in Africa have inspired confidence among American investors. Last year, U.S. exports to Sub-Saharan Africa increased 25 percent, and America's imports from AGOA countries rose 88 percent. The success of AGOA is proving that open trade and international investment are the surest and fastest ways for Africa to make progress. So last year, I was proud to sign a law extending the benefits of this vital program.

Over the next several days, you will discuss further ways to expand and diversify trade so we can sustain economic growth. I am confident that your efforts will lead to greater interest and investment in AGOA nations. You will also be offered practical information about meeting U.S. export requirements and entering U.S. markets. As part of America's long-term commitment to increased trade with Africa, I intend to launch the African Global Competitiveness Initiative, which will give a record number of entrepreneurs access to the information and advice they need to succeed in business and foreign trade.

I appreciate the good work you are doing, and I look forward to our continued partnership on AGOA. Africa is a continent of promise and talent and opportunity, and together we will help the people of Africa realize the bright future they deserve.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President's remarks were videotaped on June 30 at 4:10 p.m. in the Map Room at the White House for later transmission to the forum meeting in Dakar, Senegal. The transcript was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on July 19. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Message to the Congress Transmitting the District of Columbia's Fiscal Year 2006 Budget Request Act
July 18, 2005

To the Congress of the United States:

Pursuant to my constitutional authority and consistent with section 446 of The District of Columbia Self-Governmental Reorganizational Act as amended in 1989, I am transmitting the District of Columbia's Fiscal Year 2006 Budget Request Act.

The proposed FY 2006 Budget Request Act reflects the major programmatic objectives of the Mayor and the Council of the District of Columbia. For FY 2006, the District estimates total revenues and expenditures of $7.35 billion.

GEORGE W. BUSH

The White House,
July 18, 2005.

NOTE: This message was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on July 19.

The President's News Conference With Prime Minister John Howard of Australia
July 19, 2005

President Bush. Thank you all. Laura and I are honored to welcome Prime Minister John Howard and Janette back to the White House. We're really glad you're here. We're looking forward to having, this time, a true family lunch upstairs. It's a chance to—for two old friends, friends who happen to be old—[*laughter*]—to visit and to talk and to strategize and to think aloud about how to work together.

I got to tell you, I admire John Howard a lot. He's a man of conviction. He's got backbone. He's not afraid to make the hard decision. He's not afraid to lead, and we're

really thrilled you're here. Plus, he married well. [*Laughter*]

I appreciate a man of vision. I am looking forward to working with him in his fourth term in office, for the betterment of our own people and for the betterment of the world.

Australia and the United States share a commitment to freedom. We understand we compete against an ideology of hatred, an ideology that murders the innocent in order to achieve objectives. We know we must be steadfast and strong when it comes to bringing to justice those who would kill innocent life, like those who got killed in New York City and Washington, DC, and Bali and London and other places around the world. But we also understand that to defeat an ideology, you've got to have a better ideology, and we do, one based upon human rights and human dignity, minority rights, and freedom.

And the thing I appreciate about John Howard is he understands that. I appreciate the commitment of the Australian Government to help in the democracy movements in both Iraq and Afghanistan. We had a good talk today about the way forward in Iraq. I assured him that our position is one that says, "As the Iraqis stand up, America stands down." In other words, we're going to help Iraqis to defend themselves and, at the same time, promote a political process that will lead to a constitution—a validation of the constitution and permanent elections. We talked as well about Afghanistan and how important it is for a country like Afghanistan to show the world what is possible when it comes to democratic institutions and freedom.

I appreciated the Prime Minister's strong advice about Malaysia and Indonesia, two really important countries. And John Howard has got a lot of experience with the leaders in those countries as well as the political process in the countries. And it's always good to visit with a friend about how he sees the world.

We talked about China and North Korea. I told him that we're committed to solving the North Korean nuclear issue in a diplomatic way and that we're pleased that the six-party talks has become renewed and that we're sincere about working with China and South Korea and Japan and Russia to bring some common sense to the leader of North Korea.

We talked about the benefits of the free trade agreement we signed: Our economies are strong and that trade will help our economies stay strong and that free trade and fair trade is important for the working people in both our countries and that we're dedicated to making sure the next round of the WTO goes forward.

All in all, we had a really good discussion, the kind of discussion you'd expect from friends. And we're looking forward to continuing it over lunch.

John, welcome.

Prime Minister Howard. Thank you very much, George. And I say to you, Mr. President, and to your wife, Laura, thank you very much for the great hospitality that you've extended to Janette and to me.

This is not only a close relationship between Australia and the United States but it is a shared commitment by two peoples who have so much history and so much in the way of common values as a basis for the relationship.

Australia and the United States have never been closer than they are at the present time. But the reason that we are so close is that we are engaged together in quite a struggle against some forces and elements of evil around the world that threaten not only the people of our countries but also the people of other nations.

Terrorists indiscriminately murder people irrespective of their race, their nationality, their religion, their political party, or their political belief. And those who doubt that, I invite them to look at the casualty lists of the London Underground and the bus. You will find not 55 people of Anglo-Celtic-Protestant composition, but you will find

55 people of different races, different ethnicities, different attitudes, and different beliefs. And I say that to encapsulate the view that I hold very strongly, that to see this as some kind of struggle between the West and the rest is to completely misunderstand and completely misread what's involved.

I want to thank the President and the Congress of the United States for the support that was given so generously to the passage of the free trade agreement legislation. It passed through the two Houses of the American Congress with, I think, record majorities. And I believe that the economic association between Australia and the United States will be more important to Australia as the years go by, particularly in the area of services, where, because of the commonalities we share in language and legal systems and in so many other areas, the opportunities are going to be very much greater.

The President and I had a very extensive discussion about the involvement of both of our countries in the Asian-Pacific region, about the critical importance of Indonesia, the third largest democracy in the world, the largest Islamic country in the world, and a nation whose success is immensely important to the ideological and intellectual debate in relation to terrorism, because if Indonesia is a success story, it can be held up as an example to the rest of the Islamic world that the path forward, the path to prosperity and stability, is a path away from hatred and extremism and a path of moderation.

Can I say to you, Mr. President, that the personal relationship that we have established on behalf of our two countries means a great deal to me. But it is, as you rightly say, based on a common view of the world, that individual freedom is still the greatest glue that nations and peoples can have, that societies that honor the family as the most stabilizing influence in our community and also societies that recognize that the basis of national wealth is individual wealth built on competitive capitalism.

Not everybody in our two countries would entirely share every part of that statement of my philosophical beliefs, but I'm happy to say that in both countries, a sufficient number of people—[*laughter*]—in recent times have shared those views to put smiles on both our faces. [*Laughter*] And I must say, on a somewhat partisan note, how much I enjoyed my discussion with you on the night of the 9th of October of last year and, equally, the opportunity I have of congratulating you on your remarkable victory, which—after an election campaign that I followed with enormous interest. I come here as a friend of the United States. I come here as the leader of 20 million people who are committed, as you are, to the great causes of individual liberty and freedom. And together we can work to make a better world.

President Bush. We'll answer two questions apiece. Jennifer [Jennifer Loven, Associated Press].

Upcoming Supreme Court Nomination

Q. Thank you, Mr. President. Can you tell us, as you consider Supreme Court nominees, how important it is to you to replace Justice O'Connor with another woman? And can you bring us up to date on whether you've completed interviewing candidates?

President Bush. First, I'm comfortable with where we are in the process. That's important for you to know. Secondly, that I have thought about a variety of people, people from different walks of life, some of whom I've known before, some of whom I had never met before. I'm trying to figure out what else I can say that I didn't say yesterday that sounds profound to you without—without actually answering your question. [*Laughter*]

As I say, I do have an obligation to think about people from different backgrounds but who share the same philosophy, people who will not legislate from the bench.

That's what I told the people when I ran for President. I want to be known as the kind of person who does what he says he's going to do and—because I believe it's right. And so, I guess the best way to put it is, I'll let you know when I'm ready to tell you who it is.

John, go ahead, ask—want to call on some——

Iraq

Q. Dennis Shanahan, The Australian. Mr. President, Mr. Prime Minister, before the invasion of Iraq, Mr. Howard said that our troops would be there for months, not years. It is now years. Realistically, how long can the Australian people expect our troops to be in Iraq and Afghanistan? Is it, now, more years?

President Bush. Well, first, I think, if you're going to ask how long the Australian troops will stay, you ought to ask the person who decides where the Australian troops go in the first place. I can tell you about the American troops, and that is that they'll be there as long as necessary to complete the mission.

There's a great temptation to get me or John to put a timetable on our actions there. That doesn't make any sense. Why would you tell the enemy how long you're going to stay somewhere? Why would you—it just doesn't—we're at war, and during a war, you do the best you can to win the war, and one way to embolden an enemy is to give them an artificial timetable. I'm sure probably—timetables need to be asked—I get asked about timetables all the time here. And—but the answer is, when the Iraqis are ready to do the fighting themselves. And that's happening on a steady basis, and they're taking more and more of the fight to the enemy.

And, like, I'm sure in Australia, people in America want to know when the troops are coming home—and as quickly as possible, but we've got to complete the mission. The mission is really important. We're laying the foundation for peace. A free Iraq, a democratic Iraq in the heart of the Middle East is a part of a vision that understands free societies are peaceful societies.

We're fighting an ideology, and the way you defeat an ideology that is so backward, so evil, and so hated they kill innocent men and women regardless of religion, is to spread freedom. And that's why it's important we complete the mission in Iraq.

Prime Minister Howard. Dennis, I did make that statement, and I made it in a particular context, which I'm sure you will recall. I'm not going to try and put a time limit on our commitment in Iraq. I'm not. It will be governed by circumstances, rather than by the calendar, to borrow an expression you may have heard yesterday when I was at the Pentagon. I thought it was a very good expression, and that's why—and I won't plagiarize it; I'll acknowledge the source—that is why I use it.

But I believe that progress is being made. I think we do face a situation where, because of the horror of suicide bombing, there is a constant high level of publicity, understandably, given to that, and to the detriment of the progress that is being made at a political level. I mean, nothing can answer and deny the fact that 8 million people risked their lives to vote. Now, that is a stunning personal commitment to democracy that Australians haven't been required to do in my lifetime or, indeed, the average American citizen, either. Now, I think we have to pay some regard to that. And that is a cause worth fighting for, and it's a cause worth promoting and supporting.

Now, the great burden in Iraq is being carried by the United States, and I feel very deeply for the American people the burden they are carrying. I also pay tribute to the burden that's being carried by the British. Our commitment is significant, but obviously, it's much smaller than that of those two countries. But we will stay the distance in Iraq. We won't go until the job has been finished, and you've heard

me say that before. That's been my view for a long time, and it will remain my view.

President Bush. Caren [Caren Bohan, Reuters].

Disclosure of CIA Employee's Identity

Q. Thank you, Mr. President. In light of the concerns that the CIA leak investigation is distracting from your agenda, has Mr. Rove or any of your aides offered their resignation? And what, short of a crime, constitutes a firing offense?

President Bush. You know, I appreciate you bringing that up. My answer really hasn't changed—[*laughter*]—from 24 hours ago. It's the same answer. Now, I'll be glad to answer another question if you've got one. I—I mean, I'll be glad to repeat what I said yesterday, which is, there's an ongoing investigation, and people shouldn't jump to conclusions in the press until the investigation is over. And once the investigation is over, I'll deal with it.

Have you got another question? I don't want to shortchange you on a——

Upcoming Supreme Court Nomination

Q. I do, actually. [*Laughter*] What do you think of Edith Clement?

President Bush. Pardon me?

Q. What do you think of Edith Clement for the Court?

President Bush. Oh, well, I think it's important—let me refer you back to the first question. [*Laughter*]

Q. Can she have one more? [*Laughter*]

President Bush. I don't know, the Prime Minister is a friend. Why would I subject him to—no. [*Laughter*] Do you speak French? [*Laughter*] It's unfair I get the last word at the mike. It's all inside—I'm sorry. Please.

China

Q. Mark Riley from the Seven Network in Australia. Can I ask you both, please, for your view on China in the coming period? It seems that Australia views China principally as an economic opportunity. And we read increasingly that the U.S. sees it as an emerging military challenge, particularly in light of the comments made by General Zhu, just recently, about the possibility of a nuclear response over Taiwan. What I want to ask you particularly is what role you both see Australia playing in managing that emerging relationship?

President Bush. It's a great question. Thanks for asking it. Our relationship—let me start with our relationship with China. It is a complicated relationship. We obviously have an economic relationship with China. That's an important relationship. Our exports to China are increasing. If you're a soybean farmer in America, you're really pleased with the fact that the Chinese market is open for our soybeans.

China is a—I think it's in the world's interest that China grow an open market economy. I think open markets and free economies tend to cause people to demand additional freedoms. So it's in our economic interests, and I think it's in the world's interest that we encourage free and fair trade.

We have some difficulties on the trade front with China. One such difficulty is their currency, and we've worked with China to convince them that it makes sense for them to change how they value their currency.

A second difficulty is on intellectual property rights. It's very important for emerging economies to understand that they—in order to be a fair trading partner, that you've got to honor somebody else's intellectual property. And sometimes that's a hard concept for countries to understand. And so we're working very closely on that issue with China. By the way, that's the same message that Australia gives, and so there's one area where Australia and the United States can work together to help convince China that intellectual property rights are important.

We have a diplomatic relationship with China, obviously. And that's manifested in the recent six-party talks in North Korea.

I view it very important that China be an equal partner in those talks. We've got the capacity to bring something to the table when it's—in discussions with North Korea, and so does China. And therefore, diplomatically, we have an opportunity to affect world security and to make sure that the ultimate objective of the terrorists is not achieved, and that is the spread of weapons of mass destruction, for example. These are areas where we can cooperate and work hard.

We've got areas of issues when it comes to values. For example, I happen to believe religious freedom is very important for any society and that people ought to be allowed to worship freely—worship any way they see fit. Every time I've met with the Chinese leaders, I've, in a respectful way, shared with them the importance, I feel, for a healthy society to recognize that people think differently and worship differently and, therefore, ought to be encouraged to do so. And so our relationship is very important and very vibrant. It's a good relationship, but it's a complex relationship.

I think that Australia, first of all, has got to act in her own interests. And there's no doubt in my mind the Prime Minister will do that. Secondly, though, that we can work together to reinforce the need for China to accept certain values as universal, the value of minority rights, the value of freedom for people to speak, the value of freedom of religion, the same values we share.

Secondly, I know that Australia can lend a wise message to the Chinese about the need for China to take an active role in the neighborhood to prevent, for example, Kim Chong-il from developing a nuclear weapon. We've got a lot of common interests, and it's when those common interests and common values intersect, is where we can reinforce each other's message.

Prime Minister Howard. Mark, I think your question is based on a misapprehension shared by a number of people in Australia, and that is that we are trying to manage a relationship we have with two countries where some kind of conflict between those two countries is inevitable, and I'm not as pessimistic as that. I am a lot more optimistic for the reasons I outlined in the speech I delivered to the Lowy Institute a few months ago in Australia.

We have different relationships with the United States and China. I mean, of course, our relationship with the United States is closer and deeper than it is with China, because it's a relationship that is based upon shared values and a lot of shared history. The Chinese understand that. I think one of the bases—the basis of our relationship successfully with China over the last 8 or 9 years is that I have never disguised that fact in my discussions with the Chinese, and I've encouraged them to accept that our close defense alliance with the United States is not in any way directed against China.

But we have a good relationship with China. It's not just based on economic opportunity. There are a lot of people-to-people ties between Australia and China, and they're growing all the time. We are going to differ with China on human rights issues. You've seen recently, in the debate over Mr. Chen, you've seen an expression of views from China. But equally, I think the relationship between our two countries is mature enough to ride through temporary arguments such as that. I think China sees a growing place for herself in the world, but I think there's a great level of pragmatism in the Chinese leadership.

Now, the economic relationship between Australia and China is different from the economic relationship between the United States and China. And I understand that, and the President and I talked about that today. But I have a more optimistic view about the relationship between China and the United States, and I know that the leadership of both countries understands the importance of common sense in relation to Taiwan, a recognition that there are

differences of philosophy between the two societies.

But let us not look at this issue from an Australia vantage point, from believing that there's some inevitable dust-up going to occur. I don't believe that, and I share a great deal of optimism that that is going to be prevented. From Australia's point of view, well, we don't presume any kind of intermediary role. That would be absurd. We have relationships with the United States, which I've talked about and categorized in an unambiguous way. Everybody understands the centrality of that relationship to Australia. The Chinese understand it. But we are unashamed in developing our relations with China, and I am well pleased with the way the economic relationship has developed. And I'll continue to do everything I can in the interests of Australia to ensure that it develops further.

President Bush. Good job, John. Thank you.

Thank you all.

NOTE: The President's news conference began at 11:53 a.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Janette Howard, wife of Prime Minister Howard; and Chairman Kim Chong-il of North Korea. Prime Minister Howard referred to former Chinese diplomat Chen Yonglin, who was granted a permanent protection visa by Australia on July 8. Reporters referred to Edith Brown Clement, U.S. Circuit Judge for the Fifth Circuit; and Maj. Gen. Zhu Chenghu of China, dean, China's National Defense University.

Message to the Congress on Continuation of the National Emergency Blocking Property of Certain Persons and Prohibiting the Importation of Certain Goods from Liberia

July 19, 2005

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 the provision, I have sent the enclosed notice to the *Federal Register* for publication stating that the national emergency and related measures blocking the property of certain persons and prohibiting the importation of certain goods from Liberia are to continue in effect beyond July 22, 2005.

The actions and policies of former Liberian President Charles Taylor and other persons, in particular their unlawful depletion of Liberian resources and their removal from Liberia and secreting of Liberian funds and property, continue to undermine Liberia's transition to democracy and the orderly development of its political, administrative, and economic institutions and resources. These actions and policies pose a continuing unusual and extraordinary threat to the foreign policy of the United States. For these reasons, I have determined that it is necessary to continue the national emergency and related measures blocking the property of certain persons and prohibiting the importation of certain goods from Liberia.

GEORGE W. BUSH

The White House,
July 19, 2005.

NOTE: The notice is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

Address to the Nation Announcing the Nomination of John G. Roberts, Jr., To Be an Associate Justice of the United States Supreme Court
July 19, 2005

Good evening. One of the most consequential decisions a President makes is his appointment of a Justice to the Supreme Court. When a President chooses a Justice, he's placing in human hands the authority and majesty of the law. The decisions of the Supreme Court affect the life of every American.

And so a nominee to that Court must be a person of superb credentials and the highest integrity, a person who will faithfully apply the Constitution and keep our founding promise of equal justice under law. I have found such a person in Judge John Roberts.

And tonight I'm honored to announce that I am nominating him to serve as Associate Justice of the Supreme Court. John Roberts currently serves on one of the most influential courts in the Nation, the United States Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit.

Before he was a respected judge, he was known as one of the most distinguished and talented attorneys in America. John Roberts has devoted his entire professional life to the cause of justice and is widely admired for his intellect, his sound judgment, and personal decency.

Judge Roberts was born in Buffalo and grew up in Indiana. In high school, he captained his football team, and he worked summers in a steel mill to help pay his way through college. He's an honors graduate of both Harvard College and Harvard Law School. In his career, he has served as a law clerk to Justice William Rehnquist, as an Associate Counsel to President Ronald Reagan, and as the Principal Deputy Solicitor General in the Department of Justice.

In public service and in private practice, he has argued 39 cases before the Supreme Court and earned a reputation as one of the best legal minds of his generation. Judge Roberts has earned the respect of people from both political parties. After he was nominated for the Court of Appeals in 2001, a bipartisan group of more than 150 lawyers sent a letter to the Senate Judiciary Committee. They wrote:

> "Although as individuals we reflect a wide spectrum of political party affiliation and ideology, we are united in our belief that John Roberts will be an outstanding Federal court appeals judge and should be confirmed by the United States Senate."

The signers of this letter included a former Counsel to a Republican President, a former Counsel to two Democratic Presidents, and a former—and former high-ranking Justice Department officials of both parties.

My decision to nominate Judge Roberts to the Supreme Court came after a thorough and deliberative process. My staff and I consulted with more than 70 Members of the United States Senate. I received good advice from both Republicans and Democrats. I appreciate the care they took. I'm grateful for their advice. I reviewed the credentials of many well-qualified men and women. I met personally with a number of potential nominees.

In my meetings with Judge Roberts, I have been deeply impressed. He's a man

of extraordinary accomplishment and ability. He has a good heart. He has the qualities Americans expect in a judge, experience, wisdom, fairness, and civility. He has profound respect for the rule of law and for the liberties guaranteed to every citizen. He will strictly apply the Constitution and laws, not legislate from the bench.

He's also a man of character who loves his country and his family. I'm pleased that his wife, Jane, and his two beautiful children, Jack and Josie, could be with us tonight. Judge Roberts has served his fellow citizens well, and he is prepared for even greater service.

Under the Constitution, Judge Roberts now goes before the United States Senate for confirmation. I've recently spoken with leaders Senator Frist and Senator Reid and with senior members of the Judiciary Committee, Chairman Specter and Senator Leahy. These Senators share my goal of a dignified confirmation process that is conducted with fairness and civility. The appointments of the two most recent Justices to the Supreme Court prove that this confirmation can be done in a timely manner.

So I have full confidence that the Senate will rise to the occasion and act promptly on this nomination. It is important that the newest Justice be on the bench when the Supreme Court reconvenes in October. I believe that Democrats and Republicans alike will see the strong qualifications of this fine judge, as they did when they confirmed him by unanimous consent to the judicial seat he now holds.

I look forward to the Senate voting to confirm Judge John Roberts as the 109th Justice of the Supreme Court of the United States.

Judge Roberts, thank you for agreeing to serve, and congratulations.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:02 p.m. on the State Floor at the White House. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of Judge Roberts. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of this address.

Remarks to Reporters Following a Meeting With Associate Justice-Designate Roberts
July 20, 2005

Good morning, how are you? I just had a cup of coffee with the nominee and told him I thought things were off to a very good start for his nomination. I'm not surprised; he's highly qualified for the job. He's the kind of person that will bring great dignity to the Court. Judge Roberts is off to the Senate this morning to begin his consultations. I'm confident the Senators will come to realize what I've come to realize: We're lucky to have a man of such wisdom and intellectual strength willing to serve our country.

I'm also confident that the process will move forward in a dignified, civil way. In my conversations with Senators last night, we discussed how important it is that Judge Roberts get a fair hearing, a timely hearing, and a hearing that will bring great credit to our Nation and to the United States Senate. And so I told Judge Roberts over coffee that we'll provide all the support that's necessary for the Senators to be able to make up their minds, that we will push the process forward, because he and I both agree that it's important that he be sworn in prior to the Court reconvening in October, and that I wished him all the best.

So I appreciate you coming by for coffee this morning.

NOTE: The President spoke at 7:30 a.m. in the Rose Garden at the White House.

Remarks Honoring the Baylor University 2005 NCAA Women's Basketball Champions
July 20, 2005

The President. Congratulations. Welcome. I thought I'd have my picture with you, and then we'll go into the Oval Office.

It is my honor to welcome some highly successful women from the neighborhood. [*Laughter*] First, I want to congratulate the coach. She's—obviously knows what she's doing. But I love her spirit. I love her can-do spirit that says, "We're going to win, and we're proud to win."

And I appreciate the women who are here too. The Lady Bears were really great. And I know I'm supposed to be working hard, but I watched you. [*Laughter*] And I was really impressed. And I want to thank you for being such great athletes and such wonderful role models. And I appreciate you representing Baylor University, which is a great university, so well, with such class.

I'm here to welcome you to the Rose Garden and congratulate you for a job well done and wish one of you a happy birthday. [*Laughter*]

All right, have at it. [*Laughter*]

[*At this point, team members presented the President with gifts.*]

The President. Ten, two, and four. [*Laughter*] Congratulations. All right, anybody want to see the Oval Office? Let's go look at it.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8:28 a.m. in the Rose Garden at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Kim Mulkey-Robertson, head coach, Baylor University women's basketball team.

Remarks on the PATRIOT Act in Baltimore, Maryland
July 20, 2005

Thanks for the warm welcome. It's good to be back in Baltimore, home of the mighty Orioles and my friend Rafael Palmeiro. I had the honor of calling—I call him Raffy—the other day to congratulate him on his 500 home run, 3,000 hit club membership. And I know you're proud of him here. He's a—as you can tell, I'm a baseball guy. And one of the things about Baltimore is you're great baseball fans, and I think we're all thrilled that our friend Rafael Palmeiro is such a great player.

It's also an honor to be here at the Port of Baltimore. It's an impressive place to chopper over. There is a lot of action here in Baltimore. And I want to thank you all for giving me a chance to come by to talk about how to secure this port, other ports, the borders, and our country. That's the task at hand. And for those of you involved with protecting our homeland, I want to thank you from the bottom of my heart for your hard work.

I want to thank the Governor for welcoming me, and I appreciate the first lady

coming as well. The Governor asked how my mountain bike is going. It's not going well when you fall. [*Laughter*] It seems like it's happening quite often these days. Congratulations on a billion-dollar surplus.

I want to thank the Attorney General, Al Gonzales, for joining me. Al has been a longtime friend of mine. He is a superb lawyer. He's been my counselor, as Governor of Texas and in the White House. He is now the Attorney General of the United States of America, and I'm proud of the job he's doing for our country.

And I appreciate my friend Mike Chertoff for agreeing to become the Secretary of the Department of Homeland Security. He has got a mighty task, to make sure that old ways are abandoned for new ways, that we work closely together, that the kind of giant bureaucracy that has been created out of other bureaucracies functions smoothly. And he's doing a very good job of leading this important agency in the right direction. Mike, thanks for serving; thanks for your leadership; thanks for your clear vision about the job that you need to do.

I want to thank Congressman Dutch Ruppersberger for being here. Dutch, it's good to see you. I appreciate you coming. You're a good man to take time out of your schedule to be here.

I want to thank the mayor for joining us. Mr. Mayor, proud you're here. Thanks for taking time out of your schedule to come by to say hello.

I want to thank Brooks Royster, the executive director, for hosting this event. It is not easy to host a President. It turns out the entourages are quite large these days. But I want to thank you for making this an important event. I want to thank all of you who are here. Once again, I want to thank those who wear the uniform for joining us.

Last night I announced my nomination of a good and highly qualified man to the Supreme Court, Judge John Roberts. He's somebody Americans will be proud to have seated on that bench. He has the qualities that our country expects in a judge, experience, wisdom, fairness, and civility. He has profound respect for the rule of law. He has respect for the liberties guaranteed to every single citizen. He will strictly apply the Constitution and laws. He will not legislate from the bench. I urge the Senate to rise to the occasion, to provide a fair and civil process, and to have Judge Roberts in place before the next Court session begins on October the 3d.

I not only have the duty to nominate good people to the bench, I have the duty to work with you all to protect this country. That's our most solemn duty.

I'm going to talk about securing the homeland. But I want you to remember, as we work to secure the homeland, we have to be right 100 percent of the time, and the enemy only has to be right one time. And so therefore, the best way to protect the homeland is to go on the offense, is to find these people in foreign lands and bring them to justice before they come here to hurt us.

And that's exactly what we're doing. We're pursuing a two-pronged strategy. We're sharing intelligence with our allies. We're working with people around the world. We're on the hunt, and we will stay on the hunt. If your most important duty is to protect the homeland, it's important not to lose our nerve, our will, and our focus. And the United States will not do so. We'll continue to lead, to bring people to justice all around the world.

We're facing coldblooded killers who have an ideology that is the opposite of ours. These people believe that there should be no dissent, no freedom, no rights for women, that there only ought to be one religion—which is a misinterpretation of the great religion of Islam. That's what they believe. And they have designs; they have goals. And what are those goals? Well, they want to topple nations. They want to drive the United States and freedom-loving countries out of parts of the world so their

ideology can take hold. That's what they want, and they want to shake our will and weaken our determination.

See, the only real weapon they have is the capacity to kill innocent people and to shake our conscience, to get us to withdraw. That's what they want. And there's a reason why they want us to withdraw from the world, because they want to impose their vision, their dark vision on people.

The only way to defeat an ideology of hatred is with an ideology of hope. And so our strategy is not only, stay on the offense and to bring these people to justice; our strategy is to spread the ideology of hope found in democracy and freedom. History has proven that democracies are peaceful countries. History has proven that democracy and freedom have the capability of converting enemies into allies. The best way to secure the future for our children and grandchildren is to spread democracy and hope and freedom to parts of the world that simmer in resentment and anger and hatred.

And that's precisely what the United States of America is doing and will continue to do. These terrorists will not shake our will. They will not cause us to retreat. I believe strongly we have a duty not only to defend our homeland today; we have a duty to lay the foundation of peace for generations to come, which is precisely what we're doing.

As we work to defend the country overseas—first of all, for those of you who have got relatives in the service, for those of you who wear the uniform, I want to thank you for what you're doing. And tell your loved one—and if you're in contact with a loved one in Iraq or in Afghanistan, you can tell them this: The citizens of this great country, the citizens of the United States of America stand squarely with those who wear the uniform of the United States military.

I found an interesting contrast that when I was in Scotland a while ago, that we were there to talk about how to end poverty and disease, how to help women, how to educate young girls on the continent of Africa. That's what we were there to discuss. We were there to discuss how nations that have been blessed with riches can do our part to save lives. I don't know if you know this or not, but the United States of America is, by far, the most generous nation in the world when it comes to feeding the hungry or providing help for those who are suffering from HIV/AIDS. I believe that to whom much is given, much is required.

And in the midst of those discussions, terrorists murdered in cold blood people from all walks of life, innocent people. It's an interesting contrast, isn't it? It should be a vivid reminder about the world in which we live. We will not let down our guard. And therefore, at home, we're doing everything we can to protect the American people.

There are a lot of people who are working hard, and you're some of them. And I want to thank you for what you're doing. Oftentimes, you don't get recognized enough by the citizens. We take your work for granted often. But I know how hard you're working, and I want to thank you for that. And the Federal Government has a responsibility to help you in your work.

We're taking four key steps to protect the homeland. The first thing is to make sure that we spend resources necessary to protect the Nation—spend the money, and spend it wisely, by the way; make sure that we spend it on areas that need the help. And we're spending unprecedented resources to protect our Nation. We have more than tripled funding for homeland security since September the 11th. I want to thank the Members of Congress for working on that. Dutch, thanks.

We're developing innovative programs to defend this country against a biological, chemical, or nuclear attack. In other words, one of the biggest dangers we face is if a biological, chemical, or nuclear device

gets in the hands of terrorists. Listen, they will use them. By the way, you can't negotiate with these people or reason with them. That's what you've got to understand. These are not the kind of people you sit down and send a counselor over and hope to convince them to change their ways. These are coldblooded ideologues who will kill, and therefore, we've got to plan for the worst.

We provided—since that fateful attack on our country, we provided more than 14 billion to train, equip State and local first-responders. That makes sense, doesn't it? Those who are going to be responsible for responding to an attack are at the local level, the Federal Government ought to help, as part of the homeland security strategy, help train people. And we're spending money to do so. We've increased Federal homeland security funding by more than tenfold for firefighters and police officers and other responders. I mean, if we're asking you to be on the frontline, we ought to help you. And that's what we've done at the Federal level.

Secondly, we're strengthening the defenses at our most important and vulnerable locations. In other words, part of the strategy is to try to figure out where the enemy may attack. You assess your weaknesses, and you build on those—and you strengthen your weaknesses. Remember, this is a war. This isn't a—maybe a law enforcement adventure. We're at war with these people. And therefore, during a time of war, you've got to do everything you can to strengthen your defenses. And so we'll continue to enhance protection at our borders and coastlines and airports and bridges and nuclear powerplants and water treatment facilities and other critical sites, including transportation infrastructure.

Since September the 11th, we've provided more than $350 million to help State and local authorities improve security on mass transit. I'm sure you can figure out why I'm trying to explain what we've done about mass transit. That's what the enemy hit the other day on one of our strong allies. They used their mass transit system to try to shake our will.

The city of Baltimore and other cities around the country have received $2.4 billion in urban security grants, which they have the choice to use for mass transit security. I think that makes sense to say to a mayor, "If you've got a problem with your mass transit, here's a grant, and if you feel that's the best use of the money, use it there."

My budget for the next year proposes a 64-percent increase in infrastructure protection grants—in other words, grants that will go specifically for infrastructure, to safeguard subway, light rail, city buses, and other critical systems. And we're going to continue to work closely with State and local leaders to make other vital improvements in mass transit security.

First of all, we're constantly monitoring intelligence reports. And part of our job is to collect intelligence, look at it, analyze it, and if it's a problem that relates to a security system at a local level, we'll let you know as quickly as possible.

We take extra precautions at times of heightened risks. That's what Mike Chertoff recommended to me after the London bombings. In other words, he took a look at the situation and said, "Let's enhance our security at infrastructure points," and he raised the threat level. We're widening the use of explosive detection teams and nearly doubling the number of rail security inspectors. We're targeting assets and resources to our infrastructure. We're accelerating the development and deployment of new technologies to rapidly detect biological, radiological, and chemical attacks. That's what Mike announced last week. We're going to continue to make sure that we assess our weaknesses and strengthen our transportation systems.

Our seaports are another critical element of our national infrastructure. We've done a lot of work at our seaports, and I want to thank those of you here who have

helped. In the Port of Baltimore, ships from around the world arrive with products ranging from lumber to fuel to electronics and automobiles, and you've got a lot of it coming in, which is good news. Commerce at this port generates more than a billion dollars of revenue and sustains thousands of Maryland jobs. This port is important for your economy, in other words.

This is a gateway for foreign markets, which provides an opportunity and an important challenge for us. And we recognized that early. We've made dramatic advancements in port security since September the 11th. We've established strict new safety rules for both domestic and international shipping, and we have taken new steps to identify and inspect high-risk cargo. And that's important for our citizens to understand.

We launched what we call the Container Security Initiative to screen American-bound containers at more than 35 foreign ports so we can identify dangerous cargo before it reaches our shore. Doesn't that make sense? It seems like it does to me. In other words, we're stationing Customs folks overseas, and we're working with places that ship goods to us, to inspect cargo there so we don't burden our ports. Since September the 11th, we've provided more than $700 million in Federal grants to close off the vulnerabilities at individual ports, including 15 million for this port right here.

The success of all these efforts depends on the vigilance of the men and women protecting the ports. And you're taking critical steps here in Baltimore. And I want the citizens of this city to understand what you're doing. You've upgraded cargo inspection technology from clipboards to keyboards. I just saw some of your new cargo inspection technology. It's sophisticated. It enables a person to do a lot of inspections relatively easy. You're employing advanced screening devices, such as new radiation detectors and x-ray equipment that can penetrate steel containers. That's what I saw. I mean, you can look inside the truck; you don't even have to get in it. That's called technology, and it's working. It makes a big difference. You're patrolling the waters around the port.

I want to thank all of you who are working hard here. I want to thank members of the Coast Guard and Border Patrol and the Baltimore Port Authority.

At a major international port like this, there's a lot to do to safeguard the people. And so we're committed to help you build on the progress. The budget for next year proposes 2.3 billion in port security funding, 10 times higher than the funding since September the 11th. The budget increases the Coast Guard budget by more than 11 percent, including new funding for patrol boats. The budget boosts support for cutting-edge cargo screening technologies. I mean, we're really good at technology, and we might as well be using that technology to protect the American people.

What I'm telling you is, is that we're focused here in—and I want to thank again, thank Congress for staying focused with us. When you're at war, you can't lose sight of the fact that you're at war. And if your most important priority is to protect the people, you've got to work together to do so.

Thirdly, to protect this homeland we're making our security operations more unified and more effective. More than 180,000 men and women from 22 different agencies are working together at the Department of Homeland Security. That's a lot of folks with a lot of agencies. So Chertoff's job is to make sure everybody heads in the same direction. And we're making good progress, changing cultures, streamlining cultures, and getting people to work under a unified Department.

The FBI is changing its mission. Its primary mission is to prevent a terrorist attack. Of course, we want the FBI agents to find people and to bring them to justice when they break the law. We want them to be a part of the preventative aspect of this

war on terror too. We've reformed the intelligence community to stay a step ahead of our enemies. We created a new Director of National Intelligence to help integrate our intelligence. We want our intelligence folks sharing information and talking better.

I went to the National Counterterrorism Center the other day. It's an impressive place. It's a place where people from different agencies in our Government sit side by side to share information. This is a new kind of war. We're dealing with people who hide in the shadows of our cities. They kind of lay low, and then they show up with deadly devices. And therefore, the best way to stop them is to share intelligence. And so we're constantly working to make sure our intelligence is as good as possible.

And to strengthen the security, we've got to strengthen our partnership with State and local officials. It doesn't do any good if we can figure something out and we don't share it with people at the local level. In this State, the Maryland Coordination and Analysis Center, known as MCAC, brings together more than 20 Federal, State, and local agencies. You're doing a good thing in the State and for the local level to coordinate information. I want to tell you a story about MCAC's success.

Last summer, Baltimore County Police officers spotted a suspicious person videotaping the Chesapeake Bay Bridge. First of all, you have somebody who is alert on the ground. It was odd looking; somebody is videotaping the bridge. Maybe that happens a lot; maybe it doesn't. Anyway, this person was wise. He saw something suspicious. So they alerted the Maryland Transportation Authority Police, which then notified MCAC. When the personnel team there learned that the man was part of a Federal terrorism investigation in Illinois, they secured a warrant and arrested the guy within hours.

Think about what you just heard. You got a local man sees somebody doing something suspicious; he immediately makes a call; it goes to MCAC. Because we have information-sharing from State to State and from Federal Government to State, information popped up that this person was more than suspicious; he was wanted.

Today I got to see Gary McLhinney. I appreciate you being here, Gary. He is the chief of the Maryland Transportation Authority Police. I don't know who gets the credit in your organization, but whoever did acted wisely. Let me tell you what he said. He said, "Our officers would not have been successful in detaining and subsequently arresting the individual without the MCAC. This is how it's supposed to work." You're right: This is how it's supposed to work. Congratulations on setting up a smooth system here in the State of Maryland to better protect the people. You're serving as a model.

And see, that's what's taking place all around the homeland. People have got to understand, we're changing the old ways so people can better talk. We're all in this deal together. We all have a responsibility to protect our local citizens. And therefore, it makes sense to have a seamless capacity to talk to each other in a real-time basis, and it's working—it's working.

Fourth, to protect the homeland, we've got to give our law enforcement better tools to track and stop terrorists before they strike. And one of the most important tools is the USA PATRIOT Act. The PATRIOT Act closed dangerous gaps in America's law enforcement and intelligence capabilities, gaps that terrorists exploited when they attacked us on September the 11th.

Both Houses of Congress passed the PATRIOT Act by overwhelming bipartisan majorities, and I was proud to sign this law. And it's working. The PATRIOT Act authorized better sharing of information between law enforcement and intelligence. Before the PATRIOT Act, criminal investigators were separated from intelligence officers by a legal and bureaucratic wall. Imagine that. You get somebody investigating a problem and somebody collecting

intelligence, and they couldn't share information. And so the PATRIOT Act broke down that wall. How in the heck can people expect us to protect our country when you can't share intelligence with people who are investigating? The PATRIOT Act helped tear down the wall so that people can share information better and work as a team and break up terror networks.

Listen, finding our enemies in the war on terror is tough enough. Law enforcement should not be denied vital information their own colleagues already have. And so, for the sake of our security, the United States Congress must not rebuild the wall that prevents law enforcement from doing its job.

The PATRIOT Act allowed investigators to pursue terrorists with the same tools they use against other criminals. Think about that statement. We had people that could use certain tools against drug dealers, but couldn't against terrorists. Before the PATRIOT Act, it was easier to track the phone contacts of a drug dealer than the phone contacts of a terrorist. Before the PATRIOT Act, it was easier to get the credit card receipts of a tax cheat than that of an Al Qaida bank-roller. Before the PATRIOT Act, agents could use wiretaps to investigate a person committing mail fraud but not specifically to investigate a foreign terrorist carrying deadly weapons. Before the PATRIOT Act, investigators could follow the calls of mobsters who switched cell phones but not terrorists who switched cell phones. That didn't make any sense. The PATRIOT Act ended all these double standards.

The theory is straightforward, and it makes sense to me, Dutch, and I know it does to a lot of your colleagues. If we have good tools to fight street crime and fraud, then our law enforcement ought to have the same tools to fight terrorism. The PATRIOT Act also has updated the law to meet high-tech threats like computer espionage and cyber-terrorism. For example, before the PATRIOT Act, Internet providers who notified Federal authorities about threatening e-mails ran the risk of getting sued. Needless to say, that stopped some people from sharing threatening e-mails. Nobody likes to get sued. It happens too often in our society, by the way. The PATRIOT Act modernized the law to protect Internet companies who voluntarily disclose information to save American lives.

Terrorists are using every advantage of the 21st century technology, and we've got to make sure our law enforcement has got the tools to fight off that advantage. The PATRIOT Act helps us defeat our enemies while safeguarding civil liberties for all Americans. The judicial branch has a strong oversight role in the application of the PATRIOT Act. Law enforcement officers need a Federal judge's permission to wiretap a foreign terrorist's phone or to track his calls or to search his property. Officers must meet strict standards to use any of the tools we're talking about, and they are fully consistent with the Constitution of the United States.

Congress also oversees the use of the PATRIOT Act. Our Attorney General, Al Gonzales, delivers regular reports on the PATRIOT Act to the House and the Senate. The Department of Justice has answered hundreds of questions from Members of the Congress. In other words, there is a strong oversight role.

I want you to hear what Senator Dianne Feinstein of California said the other day. She said, "We have scrubbed the area and have no reported abuses." She was speaking about the PATRIOT Act. I want you to remember that the next time you hear someone make an unfair criticism of this important, good law. The PATRIOT Act hasn't diminished American liberties. It has helped to defend American liberties.

Over the past 3½ years, our law enforcement and intelligence personnel have put the PATRIOT Act to effective use. In other words, it's working, because we've got good people using the tools within the PATRIOT

Act. They've used the law to break up terrorist cells in New York and Oregon and Virginia and Florida. We prosecuted terrorist operatives and supporters from California to Texas and New Jersey to Illinois, North Carolina, and Ohio. In other words, we're making progress. It's one thing to have the tools. It's another thing to use them effectively within the guidelines of the United States Constitution.

The PATRIOT Act has accomplished exactly what it was designed to do. The problem is, at the end of this year, 16 critical provisions of the PATRIOT Act are scheduled to expire. All 16 provisions are practical, effective, and constitutional, and they are vital to defending our freedom.

This week, the House of Representatives will vote on legislation to renew the PATRIOT Act. As we saw in London, the terrorists are still active, and they are still plotting to take innocent life. So my message to the Congress is clear: This is no time to let our guard down and no time to roll back good laws. The PATRIOT Act is expected to expire, but the terrorist threats will not expire. I expect, and the American people expect, the United States Congress and the United States Senate to renew the PATRIOT Act without weakening our ability to fight terror, and they need to get that bill to my desk soon.

I appreciate you letting me come by to talk to you about the war on terror. This is going to be a long war, but freedom is going to prevail. This Nation of ours has always handled duties brought to us—history has always brought us challenges and problems. We've always handled them. We'll handle this one too.

See, the enemy doesn't understand the nature of the American people. We're not going to be blackmailed. We're not going to be threatened. We'll stay strong. When history has called us to action in the past, we've responded. And history is calling us now. It's the great struggle of the 21st century, and we're going to stay in the fight until it's won. We're going to make this country safer. And as importantly, for the moms and dads out there and grandfolks, we're laying the foundation of peace for your children and grandchildren.

It is such an honor to be involved with good men and women like you all who are—we're all joined together in this solemn duty to protect this great country.

I want to thank you for your hard work. I want to thank you for your dedication. May God bless you and your families, and may God continue to bless our country.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:02 a.m. at the Port of Baltimore. In his remarks, he referred to Rafael Palmeiro, infielder, Baltimore Orioles; Gov. Robert L. Ehrlich, Jr., of Maryland and his wife, Kendel; Mayor Martin O'Malley of Baltimore, MD; and F. Brooks Royster III, executive director, Maryland Port Administration.

Remarks on the Dominican Republic-Central America-United States Free Trade Agreement
July 21, 2005

Thank you all. *Sientese.* Thank you very much for the warm welcome. Thank you to the Hispanic Alliance for Free Trade for inviting me here today. And thanks to the Organization for American States for providing this fantastic forum.

What a beautiful building. What makes it even more beautiful is that the Organization of American States promotes democracy and freedom. There's nothing more beautiful than freedom. And I appreciate

your commitment to democracy and freedom. And I appreciate the chance to come to talk about a treaty, CAFTA, that will not only provide more prosperity in our hemisphere; it's not only a good deal for American workers and businessowners and farmers, this treaty will help spread democracy and peace.

Thanks for letting me come by. Raul, thank you. *Muchas gracias.* It's good to see you again. Raul is such a strong leader in the Latino community in my State of Texas that he had the high honor of having a school named for him. I can't thank you enough for being the leader you have been. And thank you and Alonzo for inviting me here today and for helping us get the bill passed.

For those of you who are members of the Hispanic Alliance for Free Trade, I want to remind you, it's one thing to come and listen to a President speak; it's another thing to work the Halls of Congress, so people speak by their votes, people that listen to you in a concrete way. So thanks for coming. Thanks for being a part of passing CAFTA.

I want to thank the Secretary General, General Insulza. Thank you, sir, for you. I want to thank the Vice President, Samuel Lewis, of the Republic of Panama. I appreciate the members of the diplomatic corps who are here. I particularly want to thank the diplomats from Central America and the Dominican Republic. I urge you to work the bill. I urge you to let people know the consequence of passage and the consequences of failure. It's important for people to understand the stakes.

I want to thank the permanent representatives to the Organization of American States. I want to thank my friend Ambassador Juan Maisto—*Embajador.* Thank you, Juan, for being here.

I appreciate the members of my Cabinet who are working hard on this piece of legislation. We got the Secretary of Agriculture, Mike Johanns, who is with us. Secretary Carlos Gutierrez is with us here. Ambassador Rob Portman, who is the point person from my administration on this important piece of legislation. They're working hard; I'm working hard.

I want to thank the people from the United States Congress who've joined us. Ileana Ros-Lehtinen from Florida, I'm glad you're here. Thanks for coming. Randy Neugebauer from west Texas; thank you for coming, Randy. Henry Cuellar, *de* south Texas, *del sur de Tejas*; and finally, Charlie Dent, thanks for coming. I'm proud you all are here. Thanks for lending your support to this important occasion. I've made my decision to support this bill because I think it's in the best interest of the country.

As a matter of fact, I make a lot of decisions as your President. I made one the other night, when I announced my nomination of Judge John Roberts to the Supreme Court. I appreciate so very much the reception he's receiving in the United States Senate. I want to thank the Senators from both political parties who are giving Judge Roberts a chance to talk about his heart, to talk about his philosophy.

He is a person that will make all Americans proud to be a member of the Supreme Court. He is a—he's got the experience, wisdom, fairness, and civility to be a really good judge. He has a profound respect for the rule of law. He respects the liberties guaranteed in our Constitution to all Americans, from—people from all walks of life. He'll strictly apply the Constitution. He's not going to legislate from the bench.

The United States Senate can show our country that it's able to have a civil debate on this very important nomination, not only a civil debate but a timely debate. It's important for Judge Roberts to be confirmed by the time the Court reconvenes in October. I thank the Senate for their action today. I urge the Senate to do its duty to have a fair, timely hearing and get this good man confirmed in time for the October reconvening of the Court.

We'll be talking about our economy and liberty in our neighborhood here in a minute, but I want to remind you all, want to remind leaders from our country and of course the leaders from other countries that are here, that we're living in historic times. And one of the reasons I say that is we're still at war, see. And it's important for all of us who love freedom to understand that this is a war being fought against ideologues that use terror to advance an agenda. This is a war against killers, cold-blooded killers who embrace an ideology of hatred. Their vision of the world is the opposite of our vision of the world. We believe in human rights, human dignity, minority rights, and religious rights. We believe in universal freedoms.

They have a different view of the world. They don't believe in women's rights. They have usurped a great religion and defined it in their terms. And if you happen to live in a society in which they're dominant, like the Taliban was in Afghanistan, and if you don't adhere to their view of religion, you're punished. They have territorial designs. They have the desire to use their terrorist techniques to frighten us. In other words, they understand when they kill in cold blood, it ends up on our TV screens. And they're trying to shake our will. And they're trying to create vacuums into which their ideology can move.

They don't understand our country, though. They don't understand that when it comes to the defense of universal freedoms, this country won't be frightened. We will defend ourselves by staying on the offense against these killers. We will find them overseas so we don't have to face them here at home. And at the same time, we understand that to defeat an ideology of hate, you work to spread an ideology of hope. And there's nothing more hopeful than a system which recognizes the rights of people, in which government is accountable to the people. And that system is democracy, based upon universal freedom.

We are laying the foundation for peace for generations to come. As we fight the terrorists and defend this homeland, we're also working to make sure this economy is strong and vibrant, and we've got reason for optimism. The tax relief we delivered is working. This economy of ours has overcome a lot, and now it's the fastest-growing economy of any major industrialized nation in the world. Inflation is low. We're well ahead of reaching our goal to cut our deficit in half by 2009. We've had 25 consecutive months of job gains. The unemployment rate is down to 5 percent. More people are working today in America than ever before in our Nation's history.

And one of the reasons why is because this administration recognizes that the way you grow an economy is you stimulate the entrepreneurial sector. Government doesn't create wealth. Government creates an environment in which the entrepreneur is willing to take risk. And I'm pleased to report the entrepreneurial spirit in our Latino communities across the country is strong, vibrant, and doing well.

We believe in encouraging ownership. The more people own something, the better off this country will be. We want more people owning their own business. Because of the vibrancy of our economy, the Hispanic unemployment rate has dropped to 5.8 percent, down from 8.4 percent 2 years ago. More people are working. More Hispanics own their home than ever before in our Nation's history, and that's great news for the American society. SBA loans to Hispanic-owned businesses are up by—doubled since I took office. In other words, there is a role for Government to help. But the Hispanic community is an entrepreneurial community to begin with, and it's responding, and it's really good news for the country.

Therefore, it doesn't surprise me to learn that many Hispanic entrepreneurs and businessowners and leaders understand the importance of expanding trade within our hemisphere. And that is why you have

come to lend your support to the Central American-Dominican Republic Free Trade Agreement, and I'm grateful. By eliminating barriers to exports from our country, CAFTA will help keep the U.S. economy growing. In other words, this is a jobs program. This will help jobs.

By opening up Central America and the Dominican Republic to U.S. trade and investment, CAFTA will help those countries develop a better life for their citizens. That seems to make sense to me. I mean, if you're living in a neighborhood, you want your neighbors doing well. If you're a good neighbor, you say, "Gosh, I hope everybody in the neighborhood is succeeding." And by helping those economies improve, CAFTA will help the nations strengthen their democracies. And that's in our national security interest. That's makes us all more secure.

So this bill is more than a trade bill. This bill is a commitment of freedom-loving nations to advance peace and prosperity throughout the Western Hemisphere. And that's important for Members of Congress to understand.

CAFTA begins by ensuring that free trade is fair trade. I mean—you know, I traveled the country quite extensively in the recent past and said, "I'm a free trader." But I reminded people in our country, I'm also for fair trade. It's one thing to advocate free trade. I believe the Government has a role to make sure that trade is fair for all of us. In other words, we want people treating us the way we treat them.

It turns out that exports from Central America into the United States face almost no tariffs. Now, I don't see how a Member of Congress can go back to his or her district and say this is a good deal for America, when our exports to Central America face hefty tariffs. In other words, if you're for free trade you ought to be insisting that the trade be fair. And the only thing that makes the trade fair to me, seems like, is to say to our friends in Central America, "Just treat us the way we treat you."

And that's what CAFTA does. It eliminates tariffs on our goods and services going into Central America. In other words, they treat us the way we treat them. It levels the playing field, which makes this a good deal for America's farmers and small-business owners and manufacturers.

Last year, United States businesses exported more than $15 billion of goods to Central America. Now, when I say "export goods," people have got to understand that means somebody is more likely to have a job. It means somebody is producing something that somebody wants in Central America, which is part of the employment picture in our country. Our business leaders say that CAFTA would significantly increase exports to the region. That's why I say this is a job program. As exports go up, somebody is either more likely to find a job or somebody is more likely to retain a job.

Take this example—California's Haas Automation Company. It is the largest machine tool manufacturer in the United States. They strongly support this piece of legislation. It says that with CAFTA, it expects to increase sales to Central America tenfold. In other words, they see business opportunity, which means job opportunity for somebody who's helping Haas Automation manufacture equipment that somebody in Central America wants to purchase.

Again, another company example here. It's called Bush Hog. I don't know why they would have put this example in this speech. [*Laughter*] I hope it wasn't named after me. [*Laughter*] But it is an Alabama company that makes farm equipment like backhoes and tillers and rotary cutters. And the folks at Bush Hog say that farmers in Central America would find their high-quality, made-in-the-United States machinery attractive if the tariffs on that equipment would be eliminated. So when you hear me say "tariff," that really means it's pricing our equipment out of the reach of the market. That's what a tariff does. It's like a tax.

So the good folks at Bush Hog manufacture something somebody wants to buy, but it's too pricey, not because of the cost of the product they produce but because of Government action. And so the purpose of NAFTA [CAFTA]* is to remove the trade barriers. Now, we've had people look at this piece of legislation, and the National Association of Manufacturers, people that represent people who manufacture something here in America, say that CAFTA would increase our manufacture exports to the region by a billion dollars, a 7-percent increase. That's good news for the manufacturing sector of the American economy.

The American Farm Bureau—they represent farmers, needless to say—estimate that by the time CAFTA is fully implemented, it would increase U.S. farm exports by as much as $1.5 billion. Let me talk about farming real quick. We produce more than we consume in the United States. And therefore, it makes sense for Government policy and for our Secretary of Agriculture to work to find markets for that which we produce. And if the products we produce are taxed via tariff, it makes those products more expensive than need be. And therefore, by reducing tariffs on agricultural exports from the United States, it opened up markets for our ranchers and farmers.

The U.S. International Trade Commission says that by passing CAFTA, we will reduce trade deficit by more than $750 million. So, in other words, this bill is good for the overall financial picture of the United States. That's why the United States House of Representatives, next week, ought to understand the economic wisdom of this bill and open up the market of 44 million consumers to U.S. businesses, U.S. farms, and U.S. manufacturers.

CAFTA includes strong enforcement provisions that go further than previous trade agreements. To protect our textile workers from unfair competition, CAFTA gives our Customs agents the ability to conduct surprise visits on Central American factories. It's one way you make sure trade is fair, you're being treated fairly.

To promote a cleaner environment, CAFTA includes provisions that will monitor and enforce environmental progress. To ensure that Central American factories abide by acceptable labor standards, CAFTA insists on stiff fines for violations. And the United States Government has committed about $180 million over 5 years to ensure that labor laws are enforced. CAFTA is a trade agreement that will be enforced, and we've got the money in the budget to do so.

CAFTA will help the nations of Central America deliver prosperity and opportunity for their citizens. Let me repeat that. CAFTA is not only good for us; it's good for their partners. That's a fair deal. That's what you want. You want an agreement to be balanced and fair. We want the agreement to be good for us, but we also want the agreement to be good for our friends. It's a lousy deal if it's a zero-sum deal. This is a good deal for CAFTA nations.

CAFTA will help nations attract investment they need for their economies to grow. In other words, with a stable trading agreement with the United States, it will make it much easier for investment to flow to our CAFTA friends. And investment means growth and opportunity. That's what that means.

By reducing tariffs on our products, CAFTA will allow consumers in their countries to enjoy goods and services at better prices. If a country doesn't produce a lot of a particular product and they need it and it's got a tariff on it, it means the consumers pay an additional price. By reducing tariffs, it means that consumers in the CAFTA nations will be able to more likely purchase that which they want at a better price. It seems like to make sense to me that if you lower the cost of food products coming from the United States

* White House correction.

to CAFTA, that's beneficial for a mom trying to buy food for her child. This is consumer-friendly in the CAFTA countries.

By lowering tariffs, CAFTA will give Central American businesses less costly access to high-quality machinery. In other words, it's going to be beneficial for the small-business owner or the large-business owner, the person who employs people in the CAFTA country to be able to buy machinery necessary to stay competitive.

By bringing economic growth—in other words, these are all elements of creating growth, increasing consumer demand by lowering prices, increasing investment, make it more likely people will be able to purchase the equipment they need to stay competitive. All this leads to more growth, which will help contribute to a vibrant middle class. And that's what we want in our neighborhood. We want there to be prosperity. We want people to have a better chance at a better life. It's in our Nation's advantage that prosperity grow throughout the neighborhood.

Elected leaders of Central America know that by opening up their nations' markets to competition, they're helping to raise standards for their own businesses and farmers. In other words, if you protect industries, it tends to become noncompetitive. It's very important for our societies to remain productive, and productivity increases happen because of competition.

By giving their garmentmakers an incentive to use U.S. fabrics and materials, our partners are creating really a regional partnership that will help both of us, both the CAFTA nations and the Dominican Republic and the United States, compete with Asian producers that are using Asian materials. And that's important for Members of Congress to understand, that if we want to—this agreement will help us remain competitive with Asian producers on certain products.

People of Central America have made their choice. They know their economic future lies in free and fair trade with the United States. They've said, "We want to join with the United States." And that's important. When this bill is passed, this country will be sending a strong message: We want to join with you as well. You want to join with us in free and fair trade; we want to join with you. And it's that alliance of interest that will make this neighborhood better. And it's important for Members of Congress to understand that.

We cannot and should not reject these young democracies. We must support democracy in our neighborhood. And CAFTA will strengthen democracies. CAFTA nations a while ago were struggling with dictatorship and tyranny and civil strife. It wasn't all that long ago that a lot of our foreign policy was occupied by actions that had been taken by governments in Central America. Today, I'm more than proud to welcome democracies to the Oval Office. These are peaceful countries. These are freedom-loving countries.

The leaders of these nations have made impressive gains toward establishing—firmly establishing democracy. But these gains cannot be taken for granted. And that's important for Members of the United States House of Representatives to understand clearly. Democracy cannot be taken for granted. We must provide the foundation for democracy through smart policy. CAFTA's smart policy. It's good trade policy. It makes it more likely somebody is going to be able to work in America when we pass CAFTA, but it also helps the neighborhood.

You see, there's no democracy—those new democracies in Central America still face forces that oppose democratic government. Make no mistake about it: There are people in our own neighborhood that oppose democracy; they're trying to separate our friends from the United States by sewing resentment and anger. People of this region need to see that democracy produces more than just free elections, that democracy produces measurable progress in their lives. As the oldest democracy in this

hemisphere, we have a moral obligation and a vital interest in helping the Central American economies and societies succeed. And therefore, CAFTA needs to be passed.

By strengthening democracy in the region, CAFTA will lead to greater security and stability. I appreciate so very much the hard work of the Central American leadership. I've had a chance to visit with these good folks. As a matter of fact, they've been coming to America quite often, and I've been going there sometimes. And that's important. That's what friends do. They strategize. They talk. The American people have got to understand, we've got friends in the leadership in Central America. And they're working hard to punish corruption and keep the streets safe. They're working hard to make sure they have a society that respects human rights and the rule of law. We're working together to nail the drug traffickers and terrorists and criminal gangs who feed on lawlessness and instability.

CAFTA will strengthen those who are taking on the forces of radicalism and violence in this hemisphere, and it will make our country more secure. As former Governor of a State that shares a long border with Mexico, I know first hand the importance of improving ties with our neighbors. It's really important that we've got strong ties in a neighborhood in which you live. I understand the importance of removing trade barriers that make it difficult for our businesses and farmers to compete.

This bill that the House of Representatives will be voting on next week is pro-jobs, pro-growth, and pro-democracy. It is important that we pass this piece of legislation. And I want to thank you all for giving me a chance to come and talk about its importance. And I encourage you to keep doing what you're doing, is talking to Members of the United States Congress and remind them, set aside partisan politics for the good of the United States of America. It's in our economic interests, it's in our national security interests that the House of Representatives join the United States Senate and pass that CAFTA bill, which I'll proudly sign on behalf of America's workers and small businesses and those of us who love and cherish democracy.

May God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:12 a.m. at the Organization of American States. In his remarks, he referred to Raul Yzaguirre, former president and chief executive officer, National Council of LaRaza; Anne Alonzo, co-founder, Hispanic Alliance for Free Trade; and Secretary General Jose Miguel Insulza of the Organization of American States. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of these remarks.

Statement on House of Representatives Passage of PATRIOT Act Reauthorization Legislation
July 21, 2005

I commend the House for voting to reauthorize provisions of the PATRIOT Act that are set to expire this year. The PATRIOT Act has enhanced information sharing between law enforcement and intelligence personnel, updated the law to adapt to changes in technology, and provided critical tools to investigate terrorists that have been used for years in cases against organized crime and drug dealers. The PATRIOT Act is a key part of our efforts to combat terrorism and protect the American people, and the Congress needs to send me a bill soon that renews the act without weakening our ability to fight terror.

Remarks in a Visit With Senior Citizens in Atlanta, Georgia
July 22, 2005

The President. How are you? Say hello to my mother. How's everybody? So what are you doing here, Patty?

Patti Patterson. We're talking about the extra help application. I'm trying to get these guys to help me spread the word to anybody and everybody that they might know might be eligible for this extra help.

The President. Well, thank you. You know, sometimes when a person hears that their Medicare program is going to change, it creates a little anxiety. And what we need is people all around the country saying to a friend, "Just take a look at the new plan." I'm telling you, we're coming with a good plan for seniors. It's really going to help a lot of people.

So this is an effort to reach out to people all around the country—here in Atlanta and all around the country—to explain to people there are some new options in Medicare that will make their lives better. It's voluntary. If you like what you got, you can stay with what you got. If you're interested in the new ideas, we're out making sure people know those options are available.

I want to thank you for being interested in helping. This is going to require a lot of chatter, a lot of people talking to their neighbors, and a lot of people helping people understand what's available and the forums that are available and the programs that are available. And I want to thank you all for reaching out.

Ms. Patterson. Thank you.

The President. I brought somebody with me—[*laughter*]—my favorite senior citizen. [*Laughter*]

Former First Lady Barbara Bush. I have to be, I've got an almost 60-year-old son. [*Laughter*]

The President. We'd like to say hello to you. Thanks for doing this. This is a national effort that you're a part of.

Former First Lady Bush. Weren't you going to tell people they ought to ask doctors, lawyers, people they trust whether this is a good deal for them?

The President. Yes, I am.

Former First Lady Bush. Yes, you are. [*Laughter*]

The President. You ought to ask your people that you count on for advice, that this is a good deal. You know, for a lot of seniors, the prescription drug benefit is going to help change their lives in a positive way. Again, if you're happy with what you're getting from Medicare or your private insurance plan, nothing changes. That's what people have got to understand. But for a lot of folks, this new modernization of Medicare is going to provide some new benefits that are going to be incredibly important.

Former First Lady Bush. It saves them money.

The President. And save money, yes. See? That's why she's here—to remind me of what to say—[*laughter*]—and save their lives.

One of the things that's interesting about Medicare is that there's a new benefit that enables people to get preventative screenings early. If you now join Medicare, the first thing that happens is the Government will give you a screening to determine whether or not there's any illnesses or conditions that need to be addressed now. That's a change in Medicare. That seems to make sense to me. If you diagnose a problem early, it's easier to solve the problem. And then starting in January of next year, there's going to be a new prescription drug benefit. And seniors, by the way, will get more choices to choose from. But it's all voluntary. In other words, the Government is not saying, "You have to do this." The Government is saying, "These programs are available to you."

So we've got a lot of good folks explaining what's available. Mother and I are going to go over to have a little forum. And one of the persons in the forum is a pharmacist. So the corner store pharmacists are now beginning to understand what the new program is, and they'll help other seniors understand, when it becomes available.

Anyway, thanks for letting us come by and say hello. It's good to see you. We're coming around to shake hands.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:18 a.m. on the Budd Terrace at the Wesley Woods Center. Participating in the visit was Patti Patterson, Deputy Regional Communications Director, Social Security Administration, Atlanta Region.

Remarks in a Discussion on Senior Security in Atlanta
July 22, 2005

The President. Thank you all. Thank you all very much. Please be seated. Thank you. I'm proud—thank you. Thank you all. We got work to do here. Thanks for the warm welcome. I know you're really cheering for Mother.

I'm really thrilled to be back in Atlanta. We're going to talk about Medicare and Social Security. Thanks for letting me come by to discuss these two really important programs with you. I think you're going to find it interesting.

I want to thank the Atlanta Chamber for sponsoring this event. I think it's a good use for the Chamber's time to let us come. I say "us" because there's going to be more than one speaker—you'll be happy to hear—to talk about things that are important for our senior citizens. This is an educational experience for people. And I can't thank you enough for sponsoring this. So to all the Chamber folks, Tom Bell and Sam Williams and the members of the Chamber, thanks a lot for letting us come by.

I want to thank my friend Sonny Perdue. You know, I saw Sonny at the airport. He and Mary kindly came by, and I said, "Sonny, how is your budget?" He said, "We got a surplus." I said, "Congratulations. That's a sign of leadership." And I want to thank you, Sonny, for serving your State.

I want to thank very much Jim Wagner, the president at Emory. We have just come from a Medicare education seminar at—on the campus of that fantastic university. It is a special place. Thanks for letting us come by. I appreciate you very much for letting us—for coming today as well.

It turns out when you fly from Washington on Air Force One, people sometimes like to get a ride. [*Laughter*] So I was honored to have coffee today on Air Force One with some really great members of the Georgia congressional delegation, starting with the United States Senator, Saxby Chambliss. And Johnny Isakson is with us too. I appreciate you, Johnny. And we flew down with Congressman Jack Kingston, Congressman John Linder, and Congressman Lynn Westmoreland, three Members of the House.

I want to thank the members of the statehouse who are here, Eric Johnson, Bill Stephens, Jerry Keen. I appreciate you all serving in the senate and the house of representatives here in the State of Georgia.

I want to thank my friend Julie Gerberding. She is the Director of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Where are you, Julie? Somewhere. Thanks for coming. Oh, there you are. It's a really important agency, and she's doing a really fine job. I'm proud of your service

to the country, and it's great to see you again.

Today Mom and I met Bill and Nina Hartman. They came out to the airport. They are volunteers with the Clayton County Retired and Senior Volunteer Program. The reason I bring them up is they are like thousands of other people around our country who have heard the call to volunteer. They've heard the call to serve our country by becoming a volunteer. These good folks help senior citizens stay healthy and active by working in a fitness center. In other words, they're taking time out of their life to help somebody else. And the reason I bring volunteering up is that if you want to serve America, a great way to do so is to feed the hungry, find shelter for the homeless, help those who need help.

Yesterday in the Oval Office, I had an extraordinary experience. A young man from Ghana who was born lame was basically adopted by a faith-based program here in America, and he got a prosthesis. He's now a bicycler and a triathlete. He set an example for others in his country that just because you're lame, doesn't mean you're a second-class citizen.

As well, a fellow came to the Oval Office who had as a dream of providing wheelchairs for those who are disabled all around the world. He wants to lift their spirits by giving them a chance to be mobile, other than—so that they're not stuck on the street corners of their cities. He realized wheelchairs were too expensive. So he designed one that will be available at a reasonable price all throughout the—I said, "Why are you doing it?" He said, "I heard a call." See, thousands of people make up the great strength of the country. And the strength of this country is the hearts and souls of our citizens. If you want to serve, volunteer. Make somebody's life better. Surround somebody who hurts with love, and you'll be doing your country a great service. I want to thank Bill and Nina for the example they've set.

How am I doing?

Former First Lady Barbara Bush. Okay. [*Laughter*]

The President. I want to make a couple of points before we get to retirement security for our seniors. First thing is, is the people of Great Britain must understand how strongly America stands with them during these trying times. I'm confident, like our country, the citizens of that country will not be intimidated by thugs and assassins. They understand what we know. They understand what the citizens of this country understand, is that we will hold true to our principles of human rights and human dignity and the freedom to worship. We're not going to let anybody frighten us from our great love of freedom.

For those of you who have got a loved one who has joined the war on terror, I want to to ask you a favor: Send them an e-mail and tell them the Commander in Chief is incredibly proud, and the United States of America stands squarely with them.

We're engaged in a global war on terror, and we're facing an enemy that has got an ideology based upon hate. If you're trying to figure out their ideology, just think the opposite of America. We believe in religious tolerance. We believe in equal rights for women. We believe in human rights and human dignity and minority rights. We believe people ought to be able to live in a free society and express themselves the way they see fit.

These folks believe in a dark vision of the world where there's no such thing as dissent or religious liberty. All you got to do is think about the Taliban in Afghanistan, where if you spoke your mind, you were whipped in the public square, and young girls weren't given an education. That's what they think, and they have designs. They have goals. They want to topple governments. They want us to retreat from the world so they can spread their ideology of hate.

The only way to protect America is a dual strategy: One, stay on the offense, bring these people to justice before they hurt us, and at the same time, spread an ideology that competes with their ideology, and that's an ideology of democracy and freedom. [*Applause*] Thank you.

We are laying—I just want you to know, for those of you who have got children and grandchildren, I firmly believe that the actions we're taking today to defend ourselves, by taking those actions, we're laying the foundation of peace for generations to come.

I want to talk about one other decision I've made recently, and then we'll get on to Medicare and Social Security. One of my most solemn duties is to find good, honorable, decent people to serve on our courts, and I did. And I had the opportunity, as you know, upon the retirement of Justice Sandra Day O'Connor, to find such a person. And I looked hard, and I consulted with the Senate and interviewed quite a few people and came to the conclusion that Judge John Roberts will make a great Supreme Court Justice.

I came to that conclusion after analyzing his record and having a good, extensive chat with him. He's a man who loves our country. He's a man who loves his family. He's a person who understands what it means to be a strict constructionist, somebody who looks at the words of the Constitution for what they are, somebody who will not legislate from the bench.

I want to thank your United States Senators for setting the right tone. I urge Senators from both political parties to rise above needless partisanship and give this good man a fair hearing and a vote as quickly as possible, so he can be seated on the bench prior to the reconvening of the Supreme Court.

It is really important that your Government constantly make—analyzes programs to make sure they work. And one of the programs that I was concerned about was Medicare, and a program I am concerned about is Social Security. I say "was concerned about Medicare" because, working with Republicans and Democrats, we have modernized the Medicare program. And today I want to spend a little time talking to you about our strategy to make sure seniors get the word that there's a modernized Medicare program now available for them.

I say modernized because if you really think about it—let me put it to you this way—Medicare would pay for heart surgery but not for the drugs that could prevent the heart surgery from being needed in the first place. That didn't make any sense. You know, you pay $100,000 for a surgery, but not $1,000, or whatever it cost, to prevent the surgery from being needed. In other words, the system was old. It worked well for a lot of seniors, but it was bureaucratic in nature. And it wasn't working well for a current generation of seniors. And so I called upon the Congress to change this. Let's do something smart on behalf of our seniors. And today I want to talk about the bill.

First thing that Medicare has done is it says that if you're—when you join Medicare, you get preventative screenings. Put it in Texas terms: In order to solve something, you got to diagnose it. And it makes sense to diagnose something early, before it gets too late. That's what we're now saying to today's seniors. That seems to make sense. If you're a taxpayer, you want to make sure the Medicare system diagnoses problems so we can solve them quicker. Secondly, we've now got people covered for screenings that can catch illnesses from diabetes to heart disease. We're beginning to change the system. We've provided drug discount cards for our seniors, and it has made a big difference for a lot of seniors. About 6 million seniors have used those cards, and it has been great savings for them.

Now, what's going to change—and this is a voluntary program, by the way. This a program that says, "If you're happy with

the way things are in Medicare, don't change. But there's going to be some new options available for you, some new choices." I happen to believe the more choices consumers get, the better off the consumers are. And so what we've done with Medicare is we've said that we've now got a prescription drug benefit available for you. Starting on October the 1st, beneficiaries will start receiving information about the available plans that you can choose from. On November 15th, the enrollment opens; January 1st, prescription coverage—prescription drug coverage begins. So that's the timetable.

I got my man Mark McClellan here. His job is to make sure that seniors get the information necessary to meet the timetable. Part of making sure seniors have got the information necessary to meet the timetable is, Mother and I have come—this is educational. We're trying to get on the TV screens so people understand there's something new coming in Medicare. And we're stimulating a grassroots effort. We're going to hear from two good folks who are involved with spreading the word to our seniors.

I say this is a good deal, and I really, truly believe it is, because, first of all, on average, beneficiaries receive over $1,300 of Federal assistance to pay for prescription drugs. Medicare will cover 95 percent of prescription costs after a senior has spent $3,600. So in other words, you got a catastrophic plan now part of Medicare. Think how important that is for a senior. You sign up—you decide to look at this option. There's an option now available so that you can rest assured that you're not going to go broke because of major medical costs, because of pharmaceuticals. In other words, the Federal Government is saying, "We're going to help you, and we're going to also make sure that there's a catastrophic plan. And we want to help you have surety and comfort as you get older, knowing that you can't get wiped out because of prescription drug bills." I think this is a very important added benefit that will be available for our seniors.

Low-income seniors—about a third of our seniors will be eligible for a drug benefit that includes little or no premium, low deductibles, and no gaps in coverage. On the average, Medicare will pay over 95 percent of the prescription drug cost for these low-income beneficiaries. It's a good deal. This isn't—we're not here to promote a political party. We're here to promote a good deal for our seniors. And I urge you, if you're a son or a daughter, find out what I'm talking about and talk to your mom or dad or talk to your grandparents. If you want to be involved through your church or through a community organization, find out about what we're talking about. And it's not hard. We've got all kinds of—1–800–MEDICARE. That's not that hard to figure out how to call that—1–800–MEDICARE or medicare.gov on the Internet. But find out what we're talking about. Verify, and then go out and help a senior make a right decision, the decision best for them.

To receive assistance, low-income beneficiaries need to fill out a simple application. I know you hear Government say simple application—there's no such thing. [*Laughter*] Actually, this is simple. McClellan will tell you how simple it is in a minute. I'm just telling you it's four pages—[*laughter*]—but the print is big. [*Laughter*]

And so we'll talk a little bit about Medicare today. It's changing for the good. Seniors will have more options from which to choose from, and that's always good. Anytime consumers get better options, it means there's going to be a better response to your needs. And again, I repeat, if you're happy the way you are—listen, I understand a lot of seniors simply don't want to change. They're pretty well happy the way things are. They shouldn't be forced to change, and they're not going to be. I'm just saying there's something else available if you're interested. And our job is

to make sure there's enough information out there to show you that it's worthwhile taking a look. So we'll discuss that.

I also want to talk about Social Security. The first thing I want to say on Social Security is, Franklin Roosevelt did a good thing when it came to Social Security. Social Security has been a really important program, and therefore, people who are receiving Social Security today must hear this loud and clear: Nothing is going to change for you.

I understand the politics of Social Security all too well. When I ran for President, they said, "If George W. gets in there, they're going to take away your checks." Well, I got in, and you're still getting your checks. And what I'm here to tell you, you're still going to get your checks. I don't care what the rhetoric is. Seniors have nothing to worry about when it comes to Social Security. What you better worry about is whether or not your grandchildren are going to get any checks.

Here's the problem: First of all, Social Security is a pay-as-you-go system. In other words, there's not a trust. Some people think, well, Social Security is the kind of deal where the Government takes your money and holds it for you and then gives it back to you when you retire. No, the Government takes your money and spends it. [*Laughter*] It's called pay-as-you-go. You pay, and we go ahead and spend. [*Laughter*] And what's left is a file cabinet full of IOUs to future generations. I know firsthand about the file cabinets. I went to West Virginia and looked at them. [*Laughter*] You'll be happy they're there. [*Laughter*] But there's not real assets in them. It's paper.

And so you got a system based upon that, and the strains on the system is this: Baby boomers like me—[*laughter*]—are getting ready to retire. There's about 40-odd-million people who are receiving benefits today. By the time my generation retires, there's going to be over 70 million people. A lot of us are getting ready to retire, and we're living longer. And interestingly enough, we've been promised greater benefits than the previous generation. So think about that. You got a lot of people who will living longer getting greater benefits. And to compound the problem, for the people sitting here today, particularly the young workers, there's fewer of you paying into the system.

In 1950, there was about 16 workers for every beneficiary. Today, there's 3.3 workers for every beneficiary. Soon there's going to be two workers for every beneficiary. That means the pay-as-you-go system is fixing to go into the red, when you think about it. Fewer people paying for a lot of people like me. And it starts in 2017—the system starts paying out more benefits than it collects.

People receiving benefits today have no problem. You got plenty of time and plenty of money that you're going to get what you—what you've been promised. But I'm here to talk to—who I'm here to talk to are the younger folks. I want you to know I cannot in good conscience, as your President, know that the system is going broke and knowing a lot of people are working hard to put payroll taxes into a broke system. And so I called upon—[*applause*].

And I think—I'm thinking about you. Now is the time to act on this. And I understand some in Washington don't want to deal with the issue. It's too politically sensitive. Well, that's fine for someone to think that way, but in my judgment, when it costs 600 billion a year, every year you wait in order to fix the system—ultimately fix it, there's nothing too sensitive. I mean, we're talking about a very important program for a lot of folks.

And so I've made some suggestions. It's one thing to say, "We got a problem," but it's another thing to say, "We got a problem, and here's some suggestions." In other words, I'm saying to the Congress, "Here's some ideas." The first idea is to make sure that future generations will receive benefits

equal or greater than the previous generation. We can do that and make the system whole.

Secondly, I believe that the system, at the very minimum, ought to say to somebody who has worked all your life, "You're not going to retire into poverty." I think it's an important principle. And therefore, I subscribe to the idea put forward, interestingly enough, by a Democrat, a fellow named Pozen, who believes that the poorest of our citizens ought to have their benefits increased by wage, at the rate wages increase. That's the way all people get their benefits today. That's one of the reasons why the system is going to go broke: The benefits are growing too fast, relative to what we can afford. So I believe people at the bottom end of the ladder ought to be able to get their benefits based upon wages.

I think the richest one percent ought to have their benefits indexed on price. And I think it ought to be scaled up in between. And by the way, that suggestion right there will solve, by far, the vast majority of the solvency issue of Social Security. In other words, by changing what has been promised but making sure everybody's benefits increase, you're going to solve the problem for younger generations of people coming up. It's a big step toward solving it. And with some other modifications, we can say that we have done our duty.

So here's some ideas for the Congress to talk about. Now, I think the Congress needs to—both Republicans and Democrats, if they've got a better idea, bring them forward. And we're getting some action. There's some good people acting in good faith, bringing some ideas forward to help make sure we solve Social Security for a generation of people coming up.

But I'll be frank with you, some people are playing politics with the issue there. They just don't, simply, want to do anything. And in my judgment, I think the people, the American people, when they really figure out the problem we got in Social Security, they're going to say to the people who are obstructing any progress, "That's not what we're interested in. We're interested in setting aside politics and doing something for a generation of Americans coming up."

I'll tell you what else we need to do. We need to not only make sure the system is solvent for a younger generation of Americans—and by the way, if you're getting your check, you don't have to worry about it. You'll notice it's the third time I've said it. Sometimes in this business of ours, you've got to keep repeating yourself in order for it to sink in.

But I tell you what else we need to do, we need to—as we fix the system permanently, we need to make it a better deal for younger workers. I think younger workers, at their option, ought to be allowed to take some of their own money and set it aside in a personal savings account. [*Applause*] Thank you.

I'll tell you why I think that. I believe that people can do a better job than the 1.2 percent return they get on their money in the current Social Security system. First of all, it's your money, and I believe that if you're given the option, the opportunity to take some of that money and set it aside in a conservative mix of bonds and stocks, that you can do a lot better than 1.2 percent that we get for you. And that growth of that money, over time, compounds and grows. And that's important. So step one, the reason you ought to be allowed to do this is you get a better deal on your own money, and you can watch it grow.

Secondly, I believe and I know that this is a better deal than the current Social Security system for widows. You realize that if you're a two-working family—spouses, both spouses work in the family and one dies early, that eventually the sole surviving spouse can choose the benefits from his plan or her plan, which is ever higher, but not both. The bottom line on what I just told you is that somebody worked a long time, and that money just goes away. That

doesn't make any sense to me. I don't think it's fair. I think if the Government lets you set aside some of your own money in an account—I know if the Government lets you do that, you'll have an asset that you can pass on to your spouse.

Thirdly, I think it's important in this society to encourage ownership. Somehow there's this notion that ownership ought to be confined to a few—the investor class is only suitable for certain folks. That's not what I think. I know that the more people own an asset that they call their own, the better off society is.

I want people from all walks of life, all neighborhoods, if they so choose, to open up a statement on a monthly basis, watching their assets grow, assets that the Government cannot take away, assets Government can't use for other programs through the pay-as-you-go system, assets that they can pass on to their loved ones, assets that they call their own. That's going to be good for America when that happens.

Now, there's a big debate about this idea in Washington—there's a big debate about this idea in Washington. Let me just conclude by giving you this fact, and the people of Georgia and the people of America can make their own conclusion about the wisdom of letting people set aside their own money, if that's what they choose to do. I'm going to tell you about the Thrift Savings Plan. It is a Federal Government savings account passed by the United States Congress. And guess what the Members of the Congress said. They said, "We'd like to set aside some of our own money as a part of the Thrift Savings account in a personal savings account. We want our money to grow better. We want our assets to be there. We want to be able to pass our assets on to whomever we choose." Here's my view. If the Thrift Savings Plan that includes a voluntary personal savings account is good enough for Members of the United States Congress, it is a good enough option of workers all across America.

Ready to go? Thank you all. I just read Mother's mind. She said, don't you think you've been talking a little too long?

Former First Lady Bush. That's not what I was thinking.

The President. Well, don't tell them what you were thinking, then, if that wasn't it. [*Laughter*]

Former First Lady Bush. I was thinking how great you look in the new brown look.

The President. About time somebody noticed. [*Laughter*]

Former First Lady Bush. Cozy.

The President. Well, thanks for coming. Why in the heck are you here? [*Laughter*]

Former First Lady Bush. I'm here because I'm worried about our 17 grandchildren, and so is my husband. They will get no Social Security. I'm also here because—I've been dying to say this. You did say freedom of speech; I heard you.

The President. Oops. [*Laughter*]

Former First Lady Bush. You better watch out. [*Laughter*] I really think that George W. could have just said, "To heck with Social Security. It won't bother me. I'll get mine. I don't need it," and forgotten the rest of the young people. I'm very proud of him. It's a political nightmare to talk about Social Security, and he's got the guts to do it. So I'm for it. [*Applause*] Thank you.

The President. Is that all you got to say?

Former First Lady Bush. I've had it on my mind. The brown suit just came up, but—[*laughter*]—I'm very proud of him.

The President. You turned 80, and all of a sudden you ran out of things to say; it's amazing. [*Laughter*] Wait a minute, she looks great at 80.

Former First Lady Bush. I just don't like having an almost-60-year-old, white-haired son. [*Laughter*]

The President. Yeah, well—you can see where I got my white hair from. [*Laughter*] Thanks for coming, Mom.

Mom is concerned about, like a lot of other grandmoms are concerned about, whether or not this Government has got

the will to solve a Social Security problem. You see, once grandmothers and granddads understand that they're going to get their check, the next question is, "Well, if it's so bad, Mr. President, how come the Congress can't come together with you and save it for my grandchildren?" And that's what's happening. It's going to take a while to get people to understand the importance of this issue. A lot of people would rather—in Congress—say, "Well, let's just don't touch it. We've got a campaign coming up," or something like that. Well, I just don't think it's right. And I want to thank you, Mom, for saying what you said.

Something is going to happen. One thing that's not going to happen is me dropping the subject. I believe my job—and this is what the people want in the President. I think—I'm pretty confident they want a President to confront problems, not pass them on to other Presidents or other Congresses.

Mark McClellan. Mark McClellan is with us. He is Dr. Mark McClellan, by the way, Texan, father of twins, twin daughters. Is that right?

Mark B. McClellan. That's right.

The President. Yes. His brother, Scott McClellan, is the face of the administration. His job is to handle the press corps. I think he does a fine—do you not—yes, he does a fine job. Thank you. I'm trying to get a little buy-in from our brothers and sisters in the press corps. So I've got two McClellan boys with me. And Mark's job is to handle the Medicare rollout. What is your job description? [*Laughter*]

Dr. McClellan. Well, it covers Medicare and Medicaid, and this is a very important time for Medicare, as you said, Mr. President. Medicare is about to turn 40, and it's, for a long time, provided help with doctor bills and hospital bills when you get sick. But as you said, medicine is now about helping you stay well. So we want to make Medicare into a new kind of program that's a partnership with seniors or people with disability—people who care about our beneficiaries, so that they can stay well and take advantage of what modern medicine has to offer. And that's what the prescription drug benefit and all the other new benefits in Medicare, the voluntary new benefits, are all about.

The President. Yes. And so here's the question we're faced with: Congress has already made the decision, as did I. They passed the law; I signed it. In other words, this is law. We're not talking about something that might happen. This is something that has already happened, and Congress, in its wisdom, gave us, I think, 2 years, if I'm not mistaken, to prepare our country, the 42 million seniors, for new options. And so I told Mark, "Your job is to make sure that the 42 million seniors get the word."

So what are you doing?

Dr. McClellan. We are on schedule to bring those benefits to seniors on January 1, 2006, as you said. And the big challenge right now is to make sure everybody with Medicare and everybody and their families and friends who care about them gets the facts so that they can make an informed decision. This is a voluntary new benefit, as you said, so people need to make a decision about it to sign up.

The President. Right, and there's the timetable I talked about; there's the phone number I talked about—1–800–MEDICARE; medicare.gov.

Now, here's what we're—here's part of our strategy. First, we're appealing to the sons and daughters of—to talk to their mom or dad about this program. And it's very important—if you want to be a good son or daughter, be responsible. Learn what we're talking about here, study it, and sit down with your mom and dad and talk about whether or not they want to choose one of the plans.

Dr. McClellan. And we can give you some information right now. No matter how you get your Medicare today—a lot of people have retiree coverage, the new Medicare benefit can help them strengthen that coverage. A lot of people are getting

coverage here in Georgia through a Medicare advantage plan, the Medicare health plan; you can get extra drug benefits through those plans. And a lot of people are struggling, Mr. President, with no help at all paying for their prescription drugs, especially people with limited means who are having to choose between medicine and other basic necessities like food and rent.

The President. Talk about the program—I've said it—come back behind me here, on the low-income seniors.

Dr. McClellan. That's right. You said it's a simple application. I'll tell you one thing, it's really simple. It's four pages. It's 16 questions.

The President. And that four—first of all, the four-page thing didn't sound——

Dr. McClellan. Big type.

The President. ——simple to some people. All right.

Dr. McClellan. That's right. There are a total of 16 questions. And a lot of times——

The President. Four questions a page. [*Laughter*]

Dr. McClellan. That's right. And let me do a little bit more math.

The President. Okay, yes. [*Laughter*]

Dr. McClellan. The drug benefit for lower-income people, for people with limited means—about a third of all our beneficiaries are eligible—it's worth close to $4,000. It's very comprehensive. It's just a few dollars for each prescription. So if you do that math, that works out to about $1,000 a page. [*Laughter*]

The President. A page, very good. This is a good deal. You know, as I told a group a while ago, they said—they hear a politician say, "It's a good deal," they're thinking, "Yes, check is in the mail." [*Laughter*] I really want you to take this seriously. And I expect, again, sons and daughters and grassroots activists and people involved with seniors to take a look at this. If you don't, you're doing a disservice to seniors. At the very minimum, you ought to take a look at what we're talking about. If you're a low-income senior, you need to get the form and fill it out. It will help you a lot. It will help you a lot. It's a—this is a compassionate piece of legislation.

Now, part of our strategy is to rely upon folks other than Government employees, and we've got two folks involved with making sure people understand what we're talking about. And one of them, we're going to start with Hugh Chancy.

Hugh, where do you live?

Hugh Chancy. Mr. President, it's a pleasure and honor to be here. I'm Hugh Chancy. I'm from Hahira, Georgia.

The President. Hahira. How many people in Hahira?

Mr. Chancy. We have a population of about 1,800.

The President. That's good, yes. Three times bigger than Crawford. [*Laughter*] And your business?

Mr. Chancy. I have a family business. My father was a pharmacist and started a pharmacy in 1966, and my brother and I inherited it. And I went off to the University of Georgia and married my sweetheart, Tina Chancy. Tina and my son, Patrick and Austin, are here with me today, the better part of my family.

The President. Let's don't segue to SEC football, if you don't mind. [*Laughter*] Keep it on the subject. So you got yourself a pharmacy——

Mr. Chancy. Right, have two pharmacies.

The President. Two pharmacies.

Mr. Chancy. I have another pharmacy in a small town above Hahira—Adel, Georgia.

The President. You bet, right around the corner. [*Laughter*] The reason why we've asked you to come is because pharmacists all across the State of Georgia understand they have a fantastic opportunity now to provide a good service to their customers.

[*At this point, Mr. Chancy, pharmacist and owner, Chancy Drugs, and president, Georgia Pharmacy Association, Hahira, GA, made further remarks.*]

The President. Isn't that fantastic? I thank you for doing that. If you're a Georgia pharmacist, call your president—this president. [*Laughter*] You can call me. I don't know if you'll get the phone call returned or not, but become involved. I mean, this is—it's in your interest, by the way, that people understand the new drug benefit.

And I want to thank you for—and your organization for providing a kindly service to help people. You said something interesting. There's—a lot of seniors are concerned about change—in other words, they hear change, and they're not sure if it's good or bad. Again, if it's voluntary, it ought to, first of all, help ease people's concerns. In other words, if you're happy with where you are, don't worry; nothing changes. But at least be wise enough to take a look and see what's available.

And so what we're—I think you're going to get the drift here, that we're going to rally the grassroots all across the country to make sure people are aware of what is available.

Speaking about rally—good job, by the way. You handled it well. Looking forward to seeing the sweetheart.

Dorothy. Dorothy Leone-Glasser.

Dorothy Leone-Glasser. Yes, sir.

The President. Is that accurate?

Ms. Leone-Glasser. Close enough.

The President. You're employed. Close enough, well—George Z. Bush. [*Laughter*] Close enough, but it's not my name. [*Laughter*] Anyway——

Ms. Leone-Glasser. No, it's Glasser.

The President. Glasser—just what I was saying, Glasser. [*Laughter*] Where do you work?

Ms. Leone-Glasser. I own a Wisdom of Wellness Project company, but I'm a nurse practitioner and a wellness counselor.

The President. Fabulous. Right here in Atlanta?

Ms. Leone-Glasser. Yes, for 25 years.

The President. Good. And how are you going to be involved in the Medicare program rollout?

Ms. Leone-Glasser. I have been involved for at least the last 3 years. I was involved initially in signing up people for their prescription drug card——

The President. Really. Good.

Ms. Leone-Glasser. ——and helping enroll them in that. And I want people to know how important it is with the new Part D of Medicare that's going to be coming January 1st in 2006, that they realize that it's not just a prescription drug card, but there are some other wonderful benefits that are coming for Medicare recipients. And remember, this is also sometimes children and people who are seriously ill on disability. And they're going to be getting a physical exam, like you said, to be able to not only screen for other diseases, but it's part of what everyone will receive on Medicare. And also, they're going to get other screenings that are going to be so important to them.

The President. What she's saying is, we've modernized the program. Can you imagine a program that didn't provide preventive care? It wasn't a very modern program. And so we've modernized it. This is also a program that now provides a very good prescription drug benefit. You know why? Because medicine had changed, and it seemed to make sense to bring Medicare into the modern world. If you're going to have a program that says we're going to give health care to our seniors, shouldn't it be modern? Shouldn't it provide modern medicine? And that's precisely what we're doing for our seniors, right?

[*Ms. Leone-Glasser made further remarks.*]

The President. Well, thanks for saying that. Dorothy is a part of a grassroots movement. Mark, she said we've got to make sure that docs understand. What are you doing to make sure docs understand?

Dr. McClellan. That's right. Well, health professionals are where people turn first

for advice about anything related to their health. The new Medicare benefits are part of that. The pharmacists, nurses, physicians are going to be very much involved in seniors getting assistance with understanding the new prescription drug benefit.

So we've got targeted kinds of materials. We've worked with medical professional groups, pharmacist groups, nursing groups, physician groups, to have material that doctors and pharmacists and nurses can use in their practices. They don't want any extra burden. They're very busy taking care of patients now. They want help for their patients, as you just heard, so that their patients can get the up-to-date care, and the materials that we're giving out can help them do that.

The President. Part of making sure our seniors are feeling good about themselves and life is to make sure the retirement system works. You heard me talking about Social Security earlier. I want to talk to two Social Security beneficiaries—you've got to speak in the mike.

Frances Heverly. I forget. I've never done it.

The President. Yes, well, it's an interesting experience, isn't it?

Mrs. Heverly. Can you hear me?

The President. I can hear you loud and clear.

Former First Lady Bush. She's 91.

The President. I know she's 91, Mom. [*Laughter*] She doesn't look a day over 90. [*Laughter*]

Mrs. Heverly. I'm a little over that.

The President. Are you? Frances Heverly, where were you raised?

Mrs. Heverly. In Pennsylvania.

The President. And how did you work your way down here to this great city?

Mrs. Heverly. Well, my family came down here, and I didn't have anybody left up north, so I came down with them.

The President. Glad you're here. I want to make sure people like Frances hear the message that they're getting a Social Security check, and nothing's going to change. Are you getting a Social Security check?

Mrs. Heverly. I sure am, and I appreciate it. [*Laughter*]

The President. So you're saying it's an important program.

Mrs. Heverly. It sure is.

The President. There's a lot of people around Georgia and around this country who feel just like Frances does, and they understand how important—they say the program is important. And you've got to know, I understand how important it is for people. There's a lot of people who rely only on their Social Security check. And therefore, you can imagine my concern when I hear people say, well—to people like Frances—"You better worry, because when they start talking about modernizing Social Security, they're really talking about taking away your check." And that's not fair.

Are your friends worried about their checks?

Mrs. Heverly. Not really.

The President. Good.

Mrs. Heverly. Not where I live. Everybody is pretty happy there.

The President. That's good. [*Laughter*] Now, let me ask you something. Have you begun to hear the message that the Social Security system is in trouble, not for you but for a generation of people coming up? Is that beginning to get out there?

Mrs. Heverly. Yes, yes.

The President. And do you expect somebody to do something about it?

Mrs. Heverly. Well, I'm expecting you to do something about it. [*Laughter*]

The President. In America, we have three branches of Government. [*Laughter*] I am going to try to do something about it.

Mrs. Heverly. I know you are.

The President. And you ought to keep expecting people, not just me but people from both political parties to do something about it.

Mrs. Heverly. I agree with you.

The President. They really ought to—we're not doing our job unless we do something about it. That's why I was proud to bring it up in the State of the Union. I don't know, I think this may be the—I can't remember—I've done a lot of visits like this around the country on Social Security. I like them; it gets me out of town. [*Laughter*] But I think it's important. Part of my job is to educate people. As you notice, we're talking about educating people on Medicare. So I'm going to keeping talking about Social Security—it's important for people to be educated about the problem that's coming.

If you're a younger worker, you'd better pay attention to this issue. I'm glad to hear Frances say she's comfortable with understanding she's going to get her check, and she is. But if you're a younger person, if you're getting into the workforce right now, I'd pay attention to this issue if I were you, because, as you know, the first thing that happens to you is—after you get your first paycheck—is recovering from the shock of that payroll tax deduction. [*Laughter*] Well, that's going into a system that's going bankrupt, and you need to hold people to account that have asked for your vote and that are serving for you, in order to get this solved.

Carol, Carol Lowing.

Carol Lowing. Hello, how are you?

The President. I am great. Having the time of my life, by the way. You know why?

Mrs. Lowing. I'm really thrilled that you're here.

The President. Thank you. I'm glad you said, "Gosh, I wish Laura were here and not you," but—[*laughter*]—it happens all the time.

Mrs. Lowing. Oh, I'd never say that.

The President. No, I'm saying, I'm glad you didn't say that, but I'm not surprised if you would. [*Laughter*]

Good, you're on—getting Social Security and Medicare.

Mrs. Lowing. Yes, definitely. I'm here today with my husband, almost 50 years married, and we still talk.

[*Mrs. Lowing, retiree, Dacula, GA, made further remarks.*]

The President. Well, thank you. There is misinformation, and the only way to try to correct the truth—I mean, look, you're going to get your checks if you've retired. And I just got to keep saying it over and over and over again, because the truth of the matter is, you're right; some people aren't interested in these reforms, and one way to stop the reforms is to put out misinformation. And people are going to get their checks.

Now, it's really interesting what her grandson says—he said, "You know, go for it." In other words, give me a chance to invest some of my own money. What has changed in America is this 401(k) culture. When I was coming up, my mother and I never sat around and talked about 401(k)s because they didn't exist—or IRAs.

But our society—there's a group of people coming up in our society today who are used to managing their own money. They've seen a 401(k), and they've seen an IRA, and they've seen their assets grow, and they are comfortable with managing a mix of bonds and stocks. And by the way, you can't take your money, under this idea, and put in the lottery. In other words, there's a go-by. These plans are managed plans. They give you a chance to invest in a conservative mix. We're not interested in setting up a program and having somebody lose it all at the dice table. That's not how it works.

And this has happened—people who are in a 401(k) know what I'm talking about—or in an IRA. And what we're interested in is getting a decent rate of return on your money, because over time, it grows and it compounds. It's called the compounding rate of interest. And it's important that that money be allowed to compound and grow. So your grandson is wise

in saying, "I want a chance to watch my money grow over the next 30 or 40 years," money that will be a part of a retirement account.

And so my job is to keep talking, assuring seniors that you're going to get your check. I hope your neighborhood is listening. Because they're going to get their check. And your grandson, obviously, is listening because he understands he isn't going to get one—[*laughter*]—unless the Federal Government stops playing party politics and focuses on the good of the United States of America. That's what we're here to talk about.

I want to thank again—I want to thank the Chamber for giving us a chance to come by and say hello. I am so grateful that we had a chance to explain to the good folks of Atlanta and whoever else is listening that there's a really interesting opportunity for seniors when it comes to good health care through Medicare. And there's an opportunity for those of us who have entered politics to solve problems, to do so when it comes to Social Security. These are important issues for today's seniors, and they're important issues for people who are going to retire.

In other words, this is a generational issue. Social Security is a generational issue. And again, I repeat, I want the youngsters who are paying attention to this to understand the consequences of inactivity. And if you see inactivity, I would strongly urge you to get involved in the system and let people know that you're not happy with what's going on. It's time for us to address this problem head on.

We're in the process of making changes in Medicare. If you want to be involved, please do so. Call 1–800–MEDICARE. Find out if the program is right for your grandmother or grandfather, your mom or dad. If you're running a community-based program, call 1–800–MEDICARE and find out how we can get materials to you. If you're interested in your church or your synagogue or your mosque or your religious organization and you want to help the seniors who attend there, find out what we're talking about. Just take a look at the brochures—it won't take long—and then give somebody some good advice. Say, "Here are the options. It's your choice to make." I think you're going to find this to be a really exciting way to help our seniors get a modernized health care system.

Thank you all for letting us come by. May God bless you all, and may God continue to bless our country.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:58 a.m. at the Boisfeuillet Jones Atlanta Civic Center. In his remarks, he referred to Thomas D. Bell, Jr., chairman of the board of directors, and Sam A. Williams, president, Metro Atlanta Chamber of Commerce; Gov. Sonny Perdue of Georgia and his wife, Mary; James W. Wagner, president, Emory University; and Robert C. Pozen, former member, President's Commission to Strengthen Social Security.

Letter to the Speaker of the House of Representatives Transmitting Budget Amendments

July 22, 2005

Dear Mr. Speaker:

I ask the Congress to consider the enclosed FY 2006 budget amendments for the Department of Homeland Security. These proposals support the Department's organizational restructuring plan, which Secretary Chertoff transmitted to the Congress on July 13. Overall, the discretionary budget

authority proposed in my FY 2006 Budget would not be increased by this reorganization proposal.

The details of these proposals are set forth in the enclosed letter from the Director of the Office of Management and Budget.

Sincerely,

GEORGE W. BUSH

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

The President's Radio Address
July 23, 2005

Good morning. Under the Constitution, one of the most consequential decisions a President makes is an appointment to the Supreme Court. This week I was proud to announce my nomination of Judge John Roberts to be the Supreme Court's next Associate Justice.

Judge Roberts has a stellar record of achievement. He is a man of sound judgment and the highest integrity. He has the qualities Americans expect in a judge, experience, wisdom, fairness, and civility. He has profound respect for the rule of law and for the liberties guaranteed to every citizen. He will strictly apply the Constitution and laws, not legislate from the bench.

Judge Roberts currently serves on the United States Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit, which is often considered America's second highest court. He has also served as a top lawyer at the Department of Justice, an attorney in the White House for President Ronald Reagan, and a distinguished advocate in private practice. He gained early experience at the Supreme Court as a law clerk to Justice William Rehnquist. He graduated with high honors from both Harvard College and Harvard Law School. And as a young man growing up in Indiana, he captained his high school football team and worked summers in a steel mill to earn money for college.

One of the highest honors for any lawyer is to argue a case before the Supreme Court. In his extraordinary career, Judge Roberts has argued a remarkable 39 cases before the Nation's highest court. He is known by Democrats and Republicans alike as a brilliant thinker, a fair-minded judge, and a decent man. After I nominated Judge Roberts to the Court of Appeals in 2001, a bipartisan group of more than 150 lawyers sent a letter to the Senate Judiciary Committee, and here is what they wrote: "Although as individuals we reflect a wide spectrum of political party affiliation and ideology, we are united in our belief that John Roberts will be an outstanding Federal appeals court judge and should be confirmed by the United States Senate. He is one of the very best and most highly respected appellate lawyers in the Nation."

The next step for Judge Roberts is the Senate confirmation process. The process is off to a good start. Since I announced his nomination, Judge Roberts has met with a number of Senators from both parties. Democrats and Republicans have expressed their respect for Judge Roberts's qualifications and intellect, just as they did 2 years ago when they confirmed him to be a Federal appeals court judge by unanimous consent.

In the weeks ahead, the Senate will have an opportunity to rise above partisanship. I've spoken to Senate Majority Leader Frist and Minority Leader Reid as well as chairman and ranking member of the Judiciary Committee, Senators Specter and Leahy.

These Senators share my goal of an orderly and dignified confirmation process, and it is important that Judge Roberts be confirmed before the Court reconvenes on October the 3d.

President Clinton's two appointments to the Supreme Court proved that the Senate can conduct a thorough review and vote on a nominee within a reasonable timetable. Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg was confirmed 42 days after the President submitted her nomination, and Justice Stephen Breyer was confirmed 73 days after his nomination was submitted. In both cases, Democrats and Republicans helped move the process forward promptly and voted to confirm the justices, despite significant philosophical differences.

America is fortunate to have a man of such wisdom and intellectual strength willing to serve our country. I'm grateful to Judge Roberts' wife, Jane, and their two children, Jack and Josie, and I look forward to the Senate voting to confirm Judge John Roberts as 109th justice of the Supreme Court of the United States.

Thank you for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 7:49 a.m. on July 22 in the Cabinet Room at the White House for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on July 23. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on July 22 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 Signing the Book of Condolence at the Embassy of Egypt
July 25, 2005

President Bush. Mr. Ambassador, thank you very much for having us. Laura and I have come to your Embassy to express our heartfelt sympathies for those who have lost their lives and our strong determination to stand with the Government of Egypt and the people of Egypt in rejecting this kind of violence and terror.

The people who struck in Sharm el-Sheikh killed Muslims, innocent mothers and dads, people who were trying to make a living. They have no heart. They have no conscience. They have no ideology that is hopeful. And they have an ideology of hate.

It was my honor to speak to your President, President Mubarak, and again reiterate my country's strong desire to stand shoulder to shoulder with the people of Egypt and bring justice to those who have killed innocent people.

Thank you for letting us come by.

Ambassador Nabil Fahmy. Thank you, Mr. President. Thank you, Mrs. Bush. I want to thank you both very much and very sincerely for coming here this morning to share with us in this moment of remembrance to the people who have lost their lives—Egyptians, foreigners—at Sharm el-Sheikh over the weekend. I think your presence here, your phone call to the President over the weekend, and also the many Americans who have been in touch with our Embassy in Cairo, reflect the nature of the relationship that we have together, as two countries working hand in hand for peace and stability in the region, working against terrorism.

As you are well aware, we were the targets of terrorism years ago, as you were on 9/11. And we continue to work together, resolute, to deal with this scourge, and ultimately, hopefully, to develop in the Middle East a region that is prosperous, stable, and secure for all.

I'd like to see this occasion to thank you both and, through you, all of the American people and to reaffirm our determination to continue to pursue terrorism without equivocation—and determination and resolve.

Thank you, sir.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:52 a.m. In his remarks, he referred to President Hosni Mubarak of Egypt.

Statement on the Launch of the Space Shuttle *Discovery*
July 26, 2005

On behalf of all Americans, I wish the crew of the Space Shuttle *Discovery* a safe and successful mission. Today's launch marks NASA's return to flight following the tragic loss of the Space Shuttle *Columbia* crew in February 2003. I thank the men and women of NASA who have dedicated themselves to putting our space program back on track. Our space program is a source of great national pride, and this flight is an essential step toward our goal of continuing to lead the world in space science, human space flight, and space exploration.

Statement on House of Representatives Passage of Small Business Health Insurance Legislation
July 26, 2005

I applaud the House of Representatives for passing the "Small Business Health Fairness Act," which will increase the availability of Association Health Plans. AHPs are a fair, innovative, and commonsense approach to make health insurance more affordable and accessible, one of my top domestic priorities. By letting small businesses join together to buy insurance at the same discounts big companies get, this bill will help workers and their families have more health care choices and obtain greater savings. This change is overdue, and I urge the Senate to follow the House's lead and pass this good legislation this year.

NOTE: The statement referred to H.R. 525.

Statement on the Innovations in American Government Award
July 27, 2005

I am pleased that my administration's Office of Management and Budget has received the Kennedy School's Innovation in American Government Award for its Program Assessment Rating Tool. I congratulate the hard-working employees at OMB for winning this award and implementing our management agenda. Taxpayer money should be spent wisely or not at all, and I am proud of the progress we have made to improve management and focus on results. We are changing the way the Federal

Government thinks about program management and budgeting. We still have work to do, and improving the effectiveness of Government and providing good value to taxpayers will continue to be a top priority of my administration.

Statement on the Asia-Pacific Partnership on Clean Development and Climate
July 27, 2005

The United States has joined with Australia, China, India, Japan, and South Korea to create a new Asia-Pacific partnership on clean development, energy security, and climate change. This new results-oriented partnership will allow our nations to develop and accelerate deployment of cleaner, more efficient energy technologies to meet national pollution reduction, energy security, and climate change concerns in ways that reduce poverty and promote economic development. The six Asia-Pacific partners will build on our strong history of common approaches and demonstrated cooperation on clean energy technologies. I have directed Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice and Secretary of Energy Sam Bodman to meet with their counterparts this fall to carry forward our new partnership and provide direction for our joint work.

Statement on House of Representatives Passage of the Dominican Republic-Central America-United States Free Trade Agreement
July 28, 2005

I am proud that the House of Representatives has acted to advance America's economic and national security interests by passing the CAFTA-DR agreement. CAFTA helps ensure that free trade is fair trade. By lowering trade barriers to American goods in Central American markets to a level now enjoyed by their goods in the U.S., this agreement will level the playing field and help American workers, farmers, and small businesses. The agreement is more than a trade bill; it is a commitment of freedom-loving nations to advance peace and prosperity throughout the Western Hemisphere. We have a moral obligation and a vital national security interest in helping the democracies of Central America and the Dominican Republic succeed, and CAFTA furthers that goal. I look forward to signing this important legislation into law.

Statement on House of Representatives Passage of Medical Liability Reform Legislation
July 28, 2005

I am pleased that the House of Representatives has again passed medical liability reform legislation. The Nation's medical liability system is badly broken, as frivolous

lawsuits are threatening access to quality health care and raising health care costs for all Americans. The medical liability crisis is driving up health care costs through higher insurance premiums, higher medical bills, and the practice of defensive medicine. This crisis also is imposing substantial costs on the Federal Government and all taxpayers who bear the cost of Medicare and Medicaid. The liability crisis is driving good doctors out of medicine and leaving patients in many communities without access to both basic and specialty medical services. This is a national problem that deserves a national solution. For the sake of all Americans, it is time for the Senate to pass meaningful medical liability reform legislation.

Memorandum on Reimbursement to the Office of the United States Trade Representative
July 28, 2005

Memorandum for the Director of the Office of Management and Budget

Subject: Reimbursement to the Office of the United States Trade Representative

Pursuant to the authority in title III of division H of Public Law 108–447, the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2005, and in section 108 of title 3, United States Code, I hereby authorize the transfer from the appropriation, "Unanticipated Needs:"

To	Amount
Executive Office of the President, Office of the United States Trade Representative	$493,000

To defray expenses incurred by the mission of the United States Trade Representative to Geneva for additional security requirements.

I hereby determine that this expenditure is necessary to meet unanticipated needs in furtherance of the national interest.

GEORGE W. BUSH

NOTE: This memorandum was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on July 29.

Remarks on Signing the Patient Safety and Quality Improvement Act of 2005
July 29, 2005

Welcome. Good morning. In a few moments, I'll have the honor of signing the Patient Safety and Quality Improvement Act of 2005. This bill is a critical step toward our goal of ensuring top-quality, patient-driven health care for all Americans.

With this law, we'll be able to obtain more accurate information about medical treatments. And by providing doctors with information about what treatments work and what treatments cause problems, we will reduce medical errors that injure and cause the deaths of thousands of Americans each year.

I commend the Members of Congress for their hard work in passing this piece of legislation. This has been a productive week for the United States Senate and the House of Representatives. I'm looking forward to signing an energy bill that will encourage conservation, increase domestic

production, and help reduce our dependence on foreign oil. I'm looking forward to signing a highway bill that will strengthen our transportation infrastructure and improve the safety of our roads and create jobs.

I appreciate the House and the Senate for passing the Central American-Dominican Republic Free Trade Agreement that will level the playing field for America's goods as well as promote democracy in our hemisphere. All these bills are good bills. They're good for the people of this country. And I appreciate their hard work in getting them to my desk.

I want to thank the Secretary of Health and Human Services for joining us, Mike Leavitt. I appreciate Senator Bill Frist, the majority leader, Dr. Bill Frist. [*Laughter*] I want to thank Committee Chairman Mike Enzi, Senator Judd Gregg, and Ted Kennedy and Jim Jeffords for their good work in the United States Senate on this piece of legislation. I appreciate my friend from Texas, Joe Barton—Congressman Joe Barton and Nathan Deal and Mike Bilirakis for joining me here today as I sign this piece of legislation.

I want to thank Dr. Edward Hill, who is the president of the American Medical Association, straight out of Mississippi. [*Laughter*] I appreciate Dr. Sophia Smith, who is the Children's National Medical Center, Dr. Janis Orlowski, who is the senior vice president of the Washington Hospital Center, and Susan Mintz—Suzanne Mintz, the president of the National Family Caregivers Association. Thank you all for coming. I also want to welcome our professionals who are here with us today.

The Patient Safety and Quality Improvement Act will help ensure that Americans continue to benefit from the greatest medical system in the world. To maintain the highest standards of care, doctors and nurses must be able to exchange information about problems and solutions. Yet in recent years, many doctors have grown afraid to discuss their practices because they worry that the information they provide will be used against them in a lawsuit.

This bill will help solve that problem. This is a commonsense law that gives legal protections to health professionals who report their practices to patient safety organizations. By providing critical information about medical procedures, doctors and nurses can help others learn from their experiences. That's why I said it's a commonsense law. By making essential information more available across America, we will help ensure that patients benefit from the best medical treatment, no matter where they live. That seems to make sense to me.

This bill builds on other commonsense reforms we're making to the American health care system. By providing a new Medicare prescription drug benefit, we're giving seniors more choices and helping them get the medicine they need. By making health savings accounts more broadly available, we're helping more Americans own and control their own health coverage. By increasing funding for community health centers, we're helping the poor and the uninsured get the quality health care they deserve and need.

We'll continue working to improve our health care system. To make it easier for employers to offer coverage to their workers, we must allow small businesses to join together to buy insurance at the same discounts that big businesses can do. To reduce costs and improve care, we must harness the power of information technology to computerize health records.

And we've got to stop the frivolous lawsuits that are running up the cost of medicine and driving good professionals out of this important profession. We need medical liability reform now. The bill I sign today is an example of people coming together to do what's right for the country.

Again, I want to thank the Members of Congress who are here. It is now my honor to sign this good bill into law.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:09 a.m. in Room 450 of the Eisenhower Executive Office Building. S. 544, approved July 29, was assigned Public Law No. 109–41.

Statement on Congressional Passage of Energy Legislation
July 29, 2005

I applaud the Congress for today's passage of an energy bill that will help secure our energy future and reduce our dependence on foreign sources of energy. The energy bill will increase conservation and efficiency, diversify our energy supply with alternative and renewable sources, expand domestic energy production in environmentally sensitive ways, and modernize our electricity infrastructure. Four years ago, I called for a national energy plan to address our Nation's energy needs for the 21st century. The bipartisan energy bill passed today will give America a comprehensive national energy strategy for the first time in more than a decade and is critically important to our long-term national and economic security. I look forward to signing it into law.

Statement on Congressional Action on Highway Legislation
July 29, 2005

I congratulate the Congress for completing a highway bill that will improve highway safety, modernize our roads, reduce traffic congestion, and create jobs. I am pleased that Congress met these objectives in a fiscally responsible way and without raising gas taxes. This important legislation will help provide the funding needed to carry out overdue work on critical highway and transportation projects, and it will strengthen and modernize the transportation networks vital to America's continued economic growth. I look forward to signing it into law.

The President's Radio Address
July 30, 2005

Good morning. This year Congress and I have addressed many key priorities of the American people, and we're making great progress.

At the start of the year, I urged Congress to ease the burden of junk lawsuits on American workers, businesses, and families, so Congress passed, and I signed bipartisan class-action reform. We called for restoring integrity to the bankruptcy process, so Congress passed, and I signed commonsense reform of our Nation's bankruptcy laws. I requested vital funds for our men and women in uniform, so Congress passed, and I proudly signed critical legislation to give our troops the resources they need to fight and win the war on terror.

This past week has brought even more progress, with four major achievements. First, I signed into law a patient safety bill

that will improve our health care system by reducing medical errors. Second, Congress came to an agreement on a highway bill that will improve safety, modernize our roads and bridges, and create jobs. Third, Congress passed the Central American-Dominican Republic Free Trade Agreement. This historic agreement will reduce barriers to American goods, services, and crops, and make our Nation more secure by strengthening the young democracies in our neighborhood.

Finally, after years of debate, Republicans and Democrats in Congress came together to pass a comprehensive energy plan that will reduce America's dependence on foreign sources of energy. This bill will encourage conservation and efficiency, increase domestic production, promote alternative and renewable resources, and modernize the electricity grid. I thank the Members of Congress who worked so hard on this vital legislation, and I look forward to signing it into law.

As Members of Congress return home for their August recess, I plan to travel to seven States around the country. I will talk to Americans about our growing economy. Thanks to the tax relief we passed and the spending restraint, our economy today is growing faster than any other major industrialized country. The unemployment rate is down to 5 percent, lower than the average of the 1970s, 1980s, and 1990s. We created more than 2 million jobs in the past 12 months. More Americans are working today than ever before in our Nation's history.

The 2005 deficit is projected to be $94 billion less than previously expected, and we're now ahead of the pace needed to meet my goal of cutting the deficit in half by 2009.

We have more to do, and I will not be satisfied until every American who wants to work can find a job. I look forward to talking to the American people about our plans to continue strengthening the economic security of America's seniors and working families.

During August, I will also meet with our troops and their families and update the American people on the latest developments in the war on terror. We have a comprehensive strategy in place. We're improving our homeland security and intelligence. The House renewed the key provisions of the PATRIOT Act that were set to expire at the end of this year, and I call on the Senate to do the same.

We're also spreading freedom, because free countries are peaceful. And we're staying on the offensive against the terrorists, fighting them abroad so we do not have to face them here at home.

I also urge Members of the Senate to use August to prepare to act on my nomination of Judge John Roberts to serve on the Supreme Court. This talented and capable man will fairly interpret the Constitution and laws, not legislate from the bench. Judge Roberts's time on the DC Circuit Court, his service at the Department of Justice and at the White House in two administrations, his impressive career as a top attorney in private practice, and his stellar academic and legal background demonstrate why Americans of all points of view have expressed their support for him.

One of the highest honors for any lawyer is to argue a case before the Supreme Court. In his extraordinary career, Judge Roberts has argued a remarkable 39 cases before the Nation's highest court. I look forward to working with the Senate in the weeks ahead so that Judge Roberts can receive a timely and dignified hearing and be confirmed before the Court reconvenes on October the 3d.

Our achievements so far this year show how much can be done when we come together to do what is right for the American people. When Congress returns in September, I will continue to work with the Republicans and Democrats to build on this good progress for all Americans.

Thank you for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 7:36 a.m. on July 29 in the Cabinet Room at the White House for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on July 30. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on July 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 to Reporters at the National Naval Medical Center in Bethesda, Maryland
July 30, 2005

President's Health/Visit With Marines

The President. I just finished two things. One, I had my physical, and I'm feeling pretty good. It's a great hospital to come to to get your physical.

But I also visited with some brave marines who have been wounded. It's a remarkable experience to meet with these incredibly courageous souls who keep their spirit. And I understand why they're serving the country. I met with their parents. I met with the healers who work here at Bethesda. It's a—it's such a great credit to our country to have a place such as this.

So I want to thank you for having me, and thanks for giving me my physical.

Rear Adm. Robinson. You're welcome, sir.

The President. Thank you.

Q. How's your health, sir?

The President. She's going to put out the return. I think you'll find it's pretty good. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:16 p.m. Participating in the visit was Rear Adm. Adam M. Robinson, Jr., USN, commander, National Naval Medical Center. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Remarks to the National Scout Jamboree at Fort A.P. Hill, Virginia
July 31, 2005

Daniel, thank you for your introduction. It's such an honor to be here. Laura and I join Americans across our country in extending our sympathy and prayers to the families of the Scout leaders who lost their lives so tragically earlier this week. The men you lost were models of good citizenship, leaders who stepped forward to serve a good and selfless cause. As Scout leaders, they devoted themselves to helping young men develop the character and skills they need to realize their dreams. These men will always be remembered for their leadership and kindness. And you Scouts honor them by living up to the ideals of the scouting they served.

Daniel, I want to thank you for your introduction. I appreciate the Scouts picking a fellow Texan to introduce me.

I want to thank Congresswoman Jo Ann Davis for her leadership. I don't know if you realize this, but she sponsored legislation in the House of Representatives to ensure that the Boy Scouts are granted equal access to public lands.

I want to thank the president of the Boy Scouts, John Cushman; Roy Williams, the chief scout executive; Fran Olmstead, the chairman of this fantastic jamboree. I also want to thank Major General Jay Yingling, who is the commander of the—Fort A.P. Hill. General, thank you and all your troops for making sure this jamboree was a great success.

Here at the 16th National Scout Jamboree, you're carrying on a tradition that dates back almost seven decades. President Franklin Roosevelt came to the first jamboree in 1937. I don't think he rode in the same kind of helicopter I did, though. [*Laughter*] You know, I was looking forward to coming last week, but the thunderstorms got in the way. So I appreciate the rain check. [*Laughter*] It's a fantastic sight to look out on more than 30,000 young men wearing the uniform of the Boy Scouts.

At this base there are Scouts from all 50 States plus Puerto Rico, Guam, the Virgin Islands, and countries from all around the world. As a former Cub Scout from Midland, Texas, I'm especially glad to be here with the Texas Scouts. [*Applause*] Sounds like you brought a big delegation this year.

Coming to this jamboree gives me great confidence in the future of our Nation. For nearly 100 years, Boy Scouts have set a high standard of service and duty to God and country. Millions of Americans have pledged the Scout oath, "On my honor, I'll do my best." And through the generations, Scouts have made America a stronger and better nation.

Scouts have excelled in fields from science to business to education to the arts. Scouts have earned Olympic Gold Medals, Nobel Prizes, and Academy Awards. Thousands of Scouts have shown the highest form of patriotism, by going on to wear the uniform of the United States military.

The first Scout Jamboree was held in Washington, DC, and Scouts have felt at home in the Nation's Capital ever since. More than half of the current Members of the United States Congress participated in the Scouts. One of the Capital's most famous Scouts is President Gerald Ford. He first saw Washington just a few years after he earned his Eagle badge and eventually became the first Eagle Scout to call the White House his home.

As President, I have the privilege to work with Scouts every day. When I come to the Oval Office in the morning, the first person I see is a Scout, my Chief of Staff, Andy Card from the State of Massachusetts. Down the hall is Vice President Dick Cheney, a Boy Scout from Casper, Wyoming. And across the river at the Pentagon sits an Eagle Scout from Illinois who Americans count on to "be prepared"—Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld.

These Scouts have a lot of things in common, and one of the most important is that they all benefited from the influence of a caring adult early in their lives. Across America, Scoutmasters and volunteers devote long hours to building the knowledge and integrity of our Scouts. It's not always an easy job. When I was a Cub Scout, my mother was our den mother. It's about the time her hair turned white. [*Laughter*] I want to thank the Scoutmasters of America and the volunteer Scouters for taking the time to care. I want to thank you for your leadership and thank you for setting such a good example for a new generation of Scouts.

When you join a Scout troop and put on the Boy Scout uniform you make a statement. Your uniform is a sign that you're a certain kind of citizen, trustworthy, loyal, helpful, friendly, courteous, kind, obedient, cheerful, thrifty, brave, clean, and reverent. These are the values of scouting, and they're important values for America. By working to live up to them, you're bringing great credit to yourselves and to our Nation.

Coming to this jamboree is a great way to practice the values of Scout law. And when you get back home, there are a few

lessons you might keep in mind. The first one is one you've probably heard before, and it's one of the most valuable lessons I've learned: Listen to your mother. I didn't have much choice. Mom always has a way of speaking her mind. When I paid attention, I benefited. And that's how it still works. Listen, you may not always agree with your mother, but think of it this way: The first voice you heard is always worth listening to.

Second, always remember where you come from and what you believe. At times you may come across people who say that moral truth is relative or call a religious faith a comforting illusion. They may question the values you learn in scouting. But remember, lives of purpose are constructed on the conviction there is right, and there is wrong, and we can know the difference.

In the years ahead, you will find that indifferent or cynical people accomplish little that makes them proud. You'll find that confronting injustice and evil requires a vision of goodness and truth. You'll find that many in your community, especially those younger than you, look to you as an example of conduct and leadership. For your sake and for the sake of our country, I hope you'll always strive to be men of conviction and character.

Finally, your life will grow in meaning when you serve a cause greater than yourself. There's a wise saying: We make a living by what we get; we make a life by what we give. That truth is expressed well in the Scout slogan: Do a good turn daily. When you help someone in need, you're making America more hopeful, one heart and one soul at a time. And you're answering the call to love a neighbor just like you'd like to be loved yourself.

Every day, every day Scouts are showing that the greatest strength of America lies in the hearts and souls of our citizens. Through your Good Turn for America initiative, Scouts have given more than 1.4 million hours of volunteer service this year alone. In Nebraska, Scouts have made more than 11,000 pocket-size flags to send to troops serving overseas. In California, Boy Scouts donated money they raised for summer camps to help victims of the tsunami in Asia. In Louisiana, Scouts collected five tons of food to donate to a food bank. In Florida, Boy Scouts and Cub Scouts worked together to clean up the roads before the Super Bowl. And right here at the National Jamboree, Scouts are working with Habitat for Humanity to build a home for a Virginia family in need. On behalf of a grateful nation, I thank the Boy Scouts for serving on the frontline of America's armies of compassion.

Another organization devoted to service is USA Freedom Corps. I created the USA Freedom Corps in 2002 to match willing volunteers with opportunities in their communities. If you're interested in serving America, if you're listening to my speech today to the Boy Scouts, call up usafreedomcorps.gov to find out ways that you can join other kind-hearted Americans across our Nation to mentor children, to assist the elderly, to clean up the neighborhoods and perform countless acts of generosity. This year, Laura is going to work with organizations like the Boy Scouts to lead an initiative called Helping America's Youth.

The Boy Scouts are recognizing our call to service with a special honor. I was pleased to accept the Good Turn for America award on behalf of the millions of volunteers all across our country who are helping this country be a hopeful place. By making a commitment to service, to integrity, and to good citizenship, all of you are showing your gratitude for the blessings of freedom.

You also understand that freedom must be defended, and I appreciate the Scouts' long tradition of supporting the men and women of the United States military. Your generation is growing up in an historic time, a time when freedom is on the march. And America is proud to lead the armies of liberation. I believe we're laying

the foundations of peace for decades to come.

And that's not the only reason I'm optimistic about the decades ahead, because I'm standing in front of America's future leaders. When you follow your conscience and the ideals you have sworn as a Scout, there is no limit to what you can achieve for our country. Continue to make right choices in life. Continue to set high standards. Continue to be a leader.

Thanks for hosting me tonight. May God bless you all, and may God continue to bless the United States of America.

NOTE: The President spoke at 7:19 p.m. In his remarks, he referred to Eagle Scout Daniel Valella of Dallas, TX, who introduced the President; John C. Cushman, president, and Roy L. Williams, chief scout executive, Boy Scouts of America; Fran Olmstead, chairman, and Maj. Gen. John Yingling, task force commander, 2005 National Scout Jamboree.

Remarks on the Recess Appointment of John Bolton as Ambassador to the United Nations

August 1, 2005

The President. Nearly 5 months ago, I nominated John Bolton to be America's Ambassador to the United Nations. I chose John because of his vast experience in foreign policy, his integrity, and his willingness to confront difficult problems head-on. I told the Nation that John Bolton would provide clear American leadership for reform at the United Nations. I told them that he would insist upon results.

The United States Senate held thorough confirmation hearings, and a majority of United States Senators agree that he is the right man for the job. Yet because of partisan delaying tactics by a handful of Senators, John was unfairly denied the up-or-down vote that he deserves.

As a result, America has now gone more than 6 months without a permanent Ambassador to the United Nations. This post is too important to leave vacant any longer, especially during a war and a vital debate about U.N. reform. So today I've used my constitutional authority to appoint John Bolton to serve as America's Ambassador to the United Nations. John Bolton will be an important member of my State Department team, led by Condoleezza Rice.

I'm sending Ambassador Bolton to New York with my complete confidence. Ambassador Bolton believes passionately in the goals of the United Nations Charter, to advance peace and liberty and human rights. His mission is now to help the U.N. reform itself to renew its founding promises for the 21st century. He will speak for me on critical issues facing the international community, and he'll make it clear that America values the potential of the United Nations to be a source of hope and dignity and peace.

As he embarks on his new assignment, Ambassador Bolton will bring tremendous wisdom and expertise. Over the past two decades, John Bolton has been one of America's most talented and successful diplomats. He's been a tireless defender of our Nation's values and a persuasive advocate for freedom and peace. As a senior leader at the State Department in the 1980s and 1990s, he brought people together to achieve meaningful results at the United Nations, from resolving payment issues to helping rally the coalition in the Persian Gulf war to repealing a shameful resolution that equated Zionism with racism. And over the past 4 years as Under

Secretary of State, he's shown valuable leadership on one of the most urgent challenges of our time: preventing the spread of weapons of mass destruction.

Ambassador Bolton takes up his duties at a time of opportunity for the United States and the United Nations. America and the U.N. are working to spread democracy, relieve hunger, and assist the victims of disaster. We've delivered hope to millions suffering from HIV/AIDS and other deadly diseases. We've helped to lay the groundwork for two landmark events in the history of liberty, the free elections of Afghanistan and Iraq. Ambassador Bolton will work to build on that progress by helping the U.N. continue to find effective new ways to match its good intentions with good results.

As the newest member of America's diplomatic corps, Ambassador Bolton will defend our Nation's interests with character and resolve that were instilled early in life. John's father was a firefighter. His mother was a homemaker who took her son to the public library to show him the value of education. I know that Jack and Virginia Bolton would be proud today to see the boy they raised in Baltimore appointed to serve as our permanent representative to the United Nations.

I'm grateful to John's wife, Gretchen, for being here with us and to the entire Bolton family for their service and sacrifice.

Mr. Ambassador, thank you for agreeing to serve your Nation once again, and congratulations.

[*At this point, Ambassador Bolton made brief remarks.*]

The President. Thanks, John. Appreciate you.

All right, thank you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:01 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 Ambassador Bolton.

Statement on the Death of King Fahd bin Abd al-Aziz Al Saud of Saudi Arabia

August 1, 2005

I was deeply saddened to learn today of the death of King Fahd bin Abd al-Aziz Al Saud, Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques and King of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. King Fahd was a man of wisdom and a leader who commanded respect throughout the entire world. He was a friend and strong ally of the United States for decades. As King, he had warm friendships with American Presidents. I send my condolences and those of the American people to King Abdallah, to the late King Fahd's family, and to the Saudi people on the passing of this historic figure. May God bless him.

Statement Congratulating King Abdallah bin Abd al-Aziz Al Saud of Saudi Arabia
August 1, 2005

On behalf of the United States, I congratulate my friend King Abdallah bin Abd al-Aziz Al Saud on assuming the Saudi throne and the position of Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques. We wish Saudi Arabia peace and prosperity under his leadership. I have spoken today to the new King, and the United States looks forward to continuing the close partnership between our two countries.

Statement on the Death of First Vice President Dr. John Garang de Mabior of Sudan
August 1, 2005

I was deeply saddened to learn of the death of Sudanese First Vice President Dr. John Garang de Mabior. He was a visionary leader and peacemaker who helped bring about the comprehensive peace agreement, which is a beacon of hope for all Sudanese. The United States is determined to maintain our commitment to the peace process in Sudan. We urge all Sudanese people to refrain from resorting to violence and to continue the implementation of the comprehensive peace agreement. John Garang's vision of peace must be embraced by all the people in Sudan so that they can live in a democratic, peaceful, and united country. On behalf of the people of the United States, Laura and I extend our deepest sympathies to Dr. Garang's wife, Rebecca, his family, and to all the people of Sudan.

Telephone Remarks to the Crew of the Space Shuttle *Discovery*
August 2, 2005

The President. Commander Collins, can you hear me?

Commander Eileen M. Collins. Yes, sir, we hear you loud and clear. Good morning.

The President. Good morning. Thank you for taking my phone call. I just wanted to tell you all how proud the American people are of our astronauts. I want to thank you for being risktakers for the sake of exploration. I want to welcome our Japanese and Australian and Russian friends. And I wish you Godspeed in your mission. I know you've got very important work to do ahead of you. We look forward to seeing the successful completion of this mission. And obviously, as you prepare to come back, a lot of Americans will be praying for a safe return.

So it's great talking to you. Thanks for being such great examples of courage for a lot of our fellow citizens.

Commander Collins. Thank you very much, Mr. President. We want to tell you that we really enjoy what we're doing. We really believe in our mission, and we believe in space exploration and getting people off the planet and seeing what's out there. So the steps that we're taking right

now are really worth it, and we want everybody to know that. And thank you very much for taking the time out of your busy schedule to talk to us.

The President. Well, listen, I want to thank you, Commander, and thank your fellow astronauts there. I agree with you. I think what you're doing is really important. And you've got a strong supporter for your mission, here in the White House. I will tell you Laura went down and watched the launch in Florida with my little brother Jeb and came back all excited about the energy that—there on the east coast of Florida. But we're with you and wish you all the very best. Thanks for taking my phone call. Now get back to work.

Commander Collins. Thank you very much, sir. We did fly over Texas today and had a good look at it. It was beautiful. Have a good day.

The President. Thank you. [*Laughter*]

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:23 a.m. from the Roosevelt Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Gov. Jeb Bush of Florida.

Remarks on Signing the Dominican Republic-Central America-United States Free Trade Agreement Implementation Act

August 2, 2005

Thanks for the warm welcome. Welcome to the White House. Last week, Congress passed the Central American-Dominican Republic Free Trade Agreement. I want to thank the Republicans and Democrats who came together to support this important agreement. The bill I'm about to sign is good for America. I'm pleased that Congress has taken a step to eliminate the barriers to America's goods and crops to 44 million customers.

I welcome the opportunity to make our Nation more secure by strengthening our ties with democracies that share our belief in free markets and free government. I appreciate the vision and leadership of Bob Zoellick and Rob Portman and the many others who worked hard to get this agreement passed. I want to thank the Secretary of State, Condi Rice, for the outstanding job she's doing on behalf of the American people. I want to thank Secretary Mike Johanns from the Department of Agriculture for joining us. And Stephanie, thank you for being here. I appreciate Secretary Carlos Gutierrez of the Department of Commerce for his good work.

We're honored to be joined by the chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, Dick Lugar. I appreciate you coming, Senator. I'm honored you're here. Senator Norm Coleman, who is the chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee, Western Hemisphere Subcommittee. I appreciate Congressman Clay Shaw, who is the chairman of the House Ways and Means Trade Subcommittee. I'm honored that these three Members of Congress are standing with us today.

I appreciate *los Embajadores* from the Central American countries, Ambassador Duenas, Ambassador Stadthagen, Ambassador Espinal, Ambassador Castillo *de* Guatemala. By the way, Espinal is Dominican Republic; Ambassador Stadthagen is from Nicaragua; Duenas is from Costa Rica. I appreciate Ambassador Leon from El Salvador, who is with us. I want to thank the Special Envoy Garcia from Honduras. I appreciate Anna Escobar, who is the Vice President of El Salvador, for joining us. *Bienvenidos.* And I want to thank Jose Insulza, who is the Secretary General of

the Organization of American States, for joining us. Welcome.

All of us in this room understand that to keep our economy growing and creating jobs, we need to open markets for American products overseas. All of us understand that strengthening our economic ties with our democratic neighbors is vital to America's economic and national security interests. And all of us understand that by strengthening ties with democracies in our hemisphere, we are advancing the stability that comes from freedom.

Right now Central American goods face almost no tariffs when they enter the United States. By contrast, U.S. exports to Central America still face hefty tariffs there. CAFTA will end these unfair tariffs against American products and help ensure that free trade is fair trade.

By leveling the playing field for our products, CAFTA will help create jobs and opportunities for our citizens. As CAFTA helps create jobs and opportunity in the United States, it will help the democracies of Central America and the Dominican Republic deliver a better life for their citizens. By further opening up their markets, CAFTA will help those democracies attract the trade and investment needed for economic growth.

This economic growth will boost demand for U.S. goods and reduce poverty and contribute to the rise of a vibrant middle class. This economic growth will raise working standards and will deliver hope and opportunity to people who have made the choice for freedom. The more opportunity that Central Americans have at home to provide for themselves and their families means it's less likely that someone looking for a job will try to come to this country illegally.

By strengthening the democracies in the region, CAFTA will enhance our Nation's security. Two decades ago, many of the CAFTA nations struggled with poverty and dictatorship and civil strife. Today, they're working democracies, and we must not take these gains for granted. These nations still face forces that oppose democracy, seek to limit economic freedom, and want to drive a wedge between the United States and the rest of the Americas. The small nations of CAFTA are making big and brave commitments, and CAFTA is a signal that the United States will stand with them and support them. By helping the CAFTA nations build free societies, we'll help them eliminate the lawlessness and instability that terrorists and criminals and drug traffickers feed on. And this will make our country safer.

CAFTA is more than a trade bill; it is a commitment among freedom-loving nations to advance peace and prosperity throughout the region. As the oldest democracy in the Western Hemisphere, the United States has a moral obligation and a vital national security interest in helping democracies in our neighborhood succeed, and CAFTA advances this goal.

And to ensure that the 21st century is one of prosperity and freedom and security, my administration will continue to work to strengthen democracy and open markets for American exports all across the world.

And now it's my honor to invite the Members of the Congress to join me as I sign the legislation that will implement the Central American-Dominican Republic Free Trade Agreement.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:15 a.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to former U.S. Trade Representative Robert B. Zoellick; U.S. Trade Representative Robert J. Portman; Stephanie Johanns, wife of Secretary of Agriculture Johanns; Costa Rica's Ambassador to the U.S. Tomas Duenas; Nicaragua's Ambassador to the U.S. Salvador Stadthagen Icaza; the Dominican Republic's Ambassador to the U.S. Flavio Dario Espinal Jacobo; Guatemala's Ambassador to the U.S. Guillermo Castillo; El Salvador's Ambassador to the U.S. Rene Antonio Leon Rodriguez; and Special Envoy Norman Garcia of Honduras. H.R. 3045, approved August 2, was assigned

Public Law No. 109–53. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of these remarks.

Statement on Signing the Department of the Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2006

August 2, 2005

Today, I have signed into law H.R. 2361, the "Department of Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2006." This bill appropriates funds for FY 2006 for the Department of the Interior, the Forest Service of the Department of Agriculture, the Indian Health Service of the Department of Health and Human Services, the Environmental Protection Agency, and several smaller agencies.

Provisions of the Act that purport to require congressional committee or individual leaders' approval prior to execution of the law shall be construed as calling solely for notification, as any other construction would be inconsistent with the principles enunciated by the Supreme Court of the United States in *INS* vs. *Chadha.* These provisions include language under the headings "United States Fish and Wildlife Service, Administrative Provisions," "National Park Service, Construction," "Departmental Management, Salaries and Expenses," "Natural Resources Damage Assessment and Restoration, Administrative Provisions," "Forest Service, Wildland Fire Management," "Administrative Provisions, Forest Service," "Administrative Provisions, Indian Health Service," and "Administrative Provisions, Smithsonian Institution," as well as sections 130, 405, 421, 422, and 435 of the Act.

Provisions of the Act, such as language under the headings "National Park Service, Historic Preservation Fund," "Environmental Protection Agency, State and Tribal Assistance Grants," and "Administrative Provisions, Smithsonian Institution," purport to require execution of the Act in consultation with congressional committees. The executive branch shall construe this requirement in a manner consistent with the Constitution's grant to the President of exclusive authority to faithfully execute the laws and supervise the unitary executive branch. Further, sections 101 and 102 purport to require the President to submit supplemental appropriations requests. The executive branch shall construe these sections in a manner consistent with the President's constitutional authority to recommend for congressional consideration such measures, including requests for appropriations, as he judges necessary and expedient.

Finally, in language under the headings "State and Tribal Assistance Grants," Environmental Protection Agency," and "Department of Health and Human Services, Indian Health Services," the Act purports to require that certain funds be spent consistent with the joint explanatory statement of managers and an instruction in a Senate report. These documents do not satisfy the constitutional requirements of bicameral approval and presentment to the President needed to give them the force of law.

GEORGE W. BUSH

The White House,
August 2, 2005.

NOTE: H.R. 2361, approved August 2, was assigned Public Law No. 109–54. An original was not available for verification of the content of this statement.

Memorandum on the Tenth Quadrennial Review of Military Compensation
August 2, 2005

Memorandum for the Secretary of Defense

Subject: Tenth Quadrennial Review of Military Compensation

Consistent with section 1008(b) of title 37, United States Code, every 4 years the President directs a complete review of the principles and concepts of the compensation system for members of the uniformed services. You shall conduct the tenth such Quadrennial Review of Military Compensation as my Executive Agent.

The Army, Navy, Marine Corps, and Air Force in the Department of Defense; the Coast Guard in the Department of Homeland Security; the commissioned corps of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration in the Department of Commerce; and the commissioned corps of the Public Health Service in the Department of Health and Human Services perform important roles in the protection of the American people and advancement of their interests at home and abroad. To continue to recruit and retain highly qualified personnel for the uniformed services as they transform themselves to meet new challenges, the departments concerned must offer, in addition to challenging and rewarding duties, compensation appropriate to the services rendered to the Nation. The departments also must apply the substantial taxpayer resources devoted to uniformed services compensation in the most effective manner possible.

In the review of the principles and concepts of the compensation system, particular attention should be paid to:

(1) ensuring that personnel in the uniformed services have the abilities and experience necessary to meet the challenges expected in the future, especially with respect to the War on Terror, defense of the homeland, and public warning and health in emergencies;
(2) maintaining the quality of life for members of the uniformed services and their families;
(3) the potential for consolidation of special pays and bonuses into fewer, broader, and more flexible authorities and for the substantial reduction or elimination of community-specific continuation and career pays in favor of more flexible and effective compensation alternatives;
(4) the potential need for enactment of broader and more flexible authorities for recruitment and retention of uniformed services personnel; and
(5) the implications of changing expectations of present and potential members of the uniformed services relating to retirement.

Please ensure that the Secretaries of Commerce, Health and Human Services, and Homeland Security participate as appropriate in the conduct of the review. I look forward to reviewing your findings and recommendations in this important undertaking.

GEORGE W. BUSH

Letter to Congressional Leaders on Continuation of Emergency Regarding Export Control Regulations
August 2, 2005

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

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 caused by the lapse of the Export Administration Act of 1979, as amended, is to continue in effect for 1 year beyond August 17, 2005.

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 notice is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

Remarks to the American Legislative Exchange Council in Grapevine, Texas
August 3, 2005

Thank you all. Thank you all. Please be seated. Earl, thanks for the warm introduction. Thanks for the invitation, and thanks for the award. And I appreciate your leadership of ALEC. Good leaders make good decisions. You made a good decision bringing this convention to Texas. [*Laughter*]

I'm pleased to be with the members of ALEC, and I want to thank you for serving. And I want to thank your families for standing by you as you serve. I appreciate you putting your community and your State and your Nation ahead of your self-interest. I also appreciate the philosophy you espouse, philosophy rooted in free enterprise, accountability for local officials at all levels, and your focus on results. I used to work with some ALEC members when I was Governor of the great State of Texas. I see a couple of them sitting around here. I appreciate you all coming. The thing I found about ALEC members is they're always willing to challenge the status quo, to espouse what I call a compassionate conservative philosophy, a philosophy that says, "Government if necessary but not necessarily Government."

And so, thanks for having me. Thanks for serving, and thanks for the invitation. Laura sends her best. She is the—she's down there in Crawford, and she is—I got to tell you, she's a great First Lady, is what she is, and a great wife.

I see the speaker and Nadine Craddick from Midland, Texas. I think one of the reasons why Laura is admired is because she has never forgot where she came from or how she was raised. She's proud of Midland, Texas. She's carrying those Midland, Texas, values to Washington, DC. And she's a great mom, great wife, and a great First Lady. I want to thank—thank you, Tommy Craddick, who is the speaker of the house—of the Texas house is with us. And Speaker, you're doing a great job. Proud of your accomplishments, proud to be with you today.

I want to thank Duane Parde, the executive director. I want to thank the members of the Texas host committee.

I want to thank the Congress folks who are here today. I see a couple of you out there, a couple of Texas Congressmen, Feeney from Florida, and Culberson is here. Thank you all for coming. I want to thank former Senator John Breaux from Louisiana for joining us. John, thanks for being here.

I asked Breaux to help out on simplifying the Tax Code. It needs to be simplified, and—looking forward to seeing your report. [*Laughter*] But thanks for serving.

In Washington, we're working on two great goals, one, strengthening our economy, so people can realize their dreams; and defending this country. And we're making good progress on both. This economy of ours is strong. It is getting stronger, and the amazing thing is to remember where we have come from. We went through a recession and a stock market correction and a terrorist attack and corporate scandals and war. And in spite of that, this economy is growing at some of the highest levels ever.

In 2003, growth was at the highest levels in nearly 20 years. Our economy today is growing faster than any other major industrialized nation in the world. We've added 2 million new jobs in the last 12 months. More people work today than ever before in our Nation's history. Employment is up in 48 of the 50 States. Unemployment is down to 5 percent. That's below the average rate of the 1970s, 1980s, and 1990s. The entrepreneurial spirit is strong. More people own a home today than ever before in our Nation's history. Our tax relief plan is working.

This week's report shows that both personal income and consumer spending grew rapidly in June. Real disposable personal income has grown by about 12 percent since the end of 2000. You know, some have questioned in Washington whether or not you can cut taxes and increase revenues for the Treasury. Well, I don't know if you saw the report that came out—recently came out. It showed that the Federal deficit is projected to be $94 billion less than previously expected. And that's because revenues are catching up. And the reason revenues are catching up is because the tax cuts stimulated economic vitality and growth all across the country. I laid out a goal for the Congress to work with the administration to cut the deficit in half by 2009, and we're ahead of pace to realize that goal.

At the State level, there's some good news. You've seen the effects of the growing economy on your revenue. State revenues in the first quarter of 2005 increased 11.7 percent from the prior year; 42 States have received more in revenue than expected, which tells me that we need to work together to make sure we're wise about how we spend that money.

Part of making sure that our economy continues to grow is to pass budget resolutions that are fiscally sound. And that's what we did in Washington, DC. I submitted the first budget to propose a cut in nonsecurity discretionary spending since Ronald Reagan was the President. And I appreciate the action in the United States House of Representatives and the United States Senate to pass a budget resolution that adhered to those principles. And now the appropriators must follow the guidelines of the budget. To keep this economy growing, we must not overspend at the Federal level.

I set out some priorities this winter, priorities to adhere to our principle that the role of Government is not to create wealth; the role of Government is to create an environment in which the entrepreneurial spirit can flourish, in which dreamers can be—realize big dreams. And as they do, they'll employ more of our fellow citizens.

I'm proud to report to you that we're making headway when it comes to legal reform. We've got too many junk lawsuits that make it hard for people to create jobs

in America. We passed class-action reform. We passed bankruptcy reform—hope we can get asbestos reform done. I tell you one other thing we need to get done in Washington, DC, this fall. For the sake of good health care, to make sure health care is available and affordable, Congress needs to pass medical liability reform and get it on my desk.

I told the United States Congress this country needs to develop an energy strategy. We should have done that 10 years ago. We should have developed a strategy that would help us diversify away from foreign sources of oil. And finally, after years of work, I'm proud to announce I'll be signing next week a comprehensive energy bill. And it's a good piece of legislation. It's a legislation that encourages domestic production. It's a piece of legislation that encourages conservation. It's also a piece of legislation that recognizes, over time, we must diversify away from our dependence on hydrocarbons. That's why we're now promoting nuclear energy. It makes sense for this country to use safe, clean nuclear power.

We've got plenty of coal in America. We're now spending the money to make sure we burn it wisely so that we can protect our environment. In this bill, we've got good clean coal technology research and development. I believe that the best way to end our dependence on foreign sources of energy is to figure out how to use different kind of automobiles. And I believe hydrogen power is going to be the source of power that will allow us to diversify over time. And this bill is good about promoting research and development for hydrogen automobiles.

Some of you from the Midwest may remember we had a problem with our electricity grid. This is a bill that modernizes the electricity grid and gets rid of old laws that prevent utilities from being able to raise money efficiently in the capital market. This is a good piece of legislation. It's a legislation that sets us on our way for independence from foreign sources of oil. I'm proud to sign it next week in New Mexico, and I want to thank the Members of the House and the Senate for getting it done.

Congress recently passed the patient safety bill which improves health care by reducing medical errors. Congress passed the highway bill. We had a little problem getting that bill done over the last couple of years because we had a disagreement about the right number. I felt that the number ought to be fiscally—a fiscally responsible number. We worked hard with Members of the Senate and the House. I'll be proud to sign a fiscally responsible highway bill next Wednesday in the State of Illinois.

Finally, I campaigned across this country telling people, I believe in free trade and fair trade. I hope we all understand the importance of opening up markets for U.S. products. If you're good at something, you ought to be selling those products, not only here at home but around the world. And we're really good at certain things. We're great at growing crops, for example. We're good at growing soybeans, and therefore, it seems to make sense that the administration ought to be working hard to opening up markets for our soybean growers and our manufacturers and our entrepreneurs and our high-tech folks.

We had a problem in our hemisphere about trade. I don't know if you realize it or not, but most of the goods from Central America came into this country duty-free. Yet 80 percent of our goods were taxed through tariffs in Central American countries. That didn't seem to make sense to me. It certainly wasn't fair. All I say to people is, you treat us the way we treat you. If your goods can come into our markets duty-free, our goods ought to be able to go into your markets duty-free.

And that's the spirit of the CAFTA legislation that I signed yesterday. It recognized that free trade must be fair trade. And the piece of legislation I signed is going to help

people find jobs here in America. It's going to make it easier for us to sell our products to 44 million consumers.

But CAFTA was more than a trade bill. CAFTA was a statement about democracy in our own neighborhood. We entered into a pact, a long-term pact with new democracies, countries that not all that long ago were wrestling with civil strife and dictatorships. These young democracies turned to America, and said, "We want to be allied with you through an economic trade pact." And by passing that bill, the United States of America made a clear statement to those young democracies that we stand with you. We will help you develop free markets and free societies. We will help you stand as you struggle to build your democracy. It's in our national interest that democracy prevail in our neighborhood.

So we got some stuff done, and I want to thank you all for your support in this legislation. I also want to thank you for standing strong when it comes to insisting that there be high standards and accountability in our public school systems. I was proud to sign the No Child Left Behind Act. It's what I call challenging the soft bigotry of low expectations. If you do not have high standards and if you do not measure, people just simply get shuffled through the system. That's not what we believe. And I told you earlier I was proud of ALEC because of your results-oriented nature. You believe in results.

I believe in local control of schools, and that's inherent in the No Child Left Behind Act. It says, "You measure. You court your—chart your course to excellence." But I also believe in results, and when we spend money at the Federal level, I expect people who are spending that money to show the taxpayers results. And that's why we're measuring. That's why we want to know whether a child can read and write and add and subtract. It's not too much to ask. You shouldn't be afraid to ask that question to your local educators and school boards. You ought to say, "Listen, we trust you. We believe in you. We support you, but why don't you show us." See, you can't correct a problem until you diagnose a problem.

Inherent in the No Child Left Behind Act is our belief that we've got to diagnose problems before you can solve problems. And by the way, it's working. There's an achievement gap in America. We've got too many young African American kids who aren't reading at the proper grade level, relative to Anglo kids. But because of the No Child Left Behind Act and because of good teachers and because of good leadership at the State level, that achievement gap is narrowing, and America is better off for it.

I want to thank you for your support of the Faith-Based and Community Initiative. We understand that Government can't love. Government can pass law. Government can hand out money, but Government cannot put heart—hope in a person's heart or a sense of purpose in a person's life. That's done when a loving citizen puts their arm around somebody who hurts and says, "How can I help you? What can I do to make your life better?" The true strength of America lies in the hearts and souls of our fellow citizens. That's our strength. Our strength can be found in the armies of compassion which exist all across America.

ALEC understands that the best way to bring hope into the dark corners of our country, the best way to bring optimism into people's lives is to stand squarely on—side by side with faith-based organizations and community-based organizations whose members have heard that call to love a neighbor just like you'd like to love—be loved yourself.

At the Federal level, we'll continue to open up Federal money for grant purposes for faith-based programs. And at the same time, we will not allow bureaucracies to say to a faith-based program, "You can't practice your faith." We're saving lives in America because we're unleashing the great

compassion of America, the people of America, and the people whose hearts are right. I'm honored to be standing with good folks who understand that we can save America, one heart, one soul, and one conscience at a time. So I want to thank you for your support of the faith-based initiatives.

I hope Congress gets a good rest because they got a lot of work to do when they get back. The Senate has got work to do, starting with the confirmation of a fine man, Judge John Roberts. John Roberts is highly qualified. He's one of the best appellate attorneys in the United States. He has argued 39 cases before the Supreme Court. I nominated him to the DC District Court, and he was approved by unanimous consent in the United States Senate. That means nobody objected. I spent time with John Roberts. He's a good family man. He has got a good way about him, a good modest fellow who is plenty bright. But most importantly, John Roberts is a man who will interpret the law—interpret the law based upon the United States Constitution, and he will not legislate from the bench.

The Senate needs to conduct this hearing in a way that brings credit to the Senate. They need to have a good, honest debate about Judge Roberts. But I hope it's done in a way that brings dignity to the process. And they must be deliberate, but they also must hear this call: Roberts needs to get his hearing done and the confirmation completed so he can be seated before the Supreme Court reconvenes in early October.

Congress needs to continue debating Social Security. Let me tell you about what I think my job description is. I think my job is to confront problems, not pass them on to future Presidents and future Congresses. I know that's what the American people expect of their leaders, and I see a problem in Social Security. I'm part of the problem. I'm fixing to retire. [*Laughter*] Matter of fact, my retirement age is in 2008. That's when I'm eligible for Social Security. It's a convenient year. [*Laughter*] And I'm not the only one. There's a lot of us who are eligible to retire. We're called the baby boomers. There's about 40 million people today receiving Social Security. By the time the baby boomers like me get completely retired, there will be about 75 million. In other words, a lot—there's a lot of us. And we're living longer than previous generations. Matter of fact, I think I'm going to ride the old mountain bike this afternoon in Crawford to make sure I live longer—[*laughter*]—if I can survive the heat.

We've been promised greater benefits than the previous generation. People went around the country saying, "Vote for me. I'll increase your Social Security benefits." And sure enough, that's one of the promises that Congress kept. You've got a lot of people living longer, getting greater benefits, with fewer people paying in the system. In the early fifties, there was about 16 workers to every beneficiary. Today, there's 3.3 workers for every beneficiary. Soon there's going to be two workers for every beneficiary. If you look at the cash flow analysis, you'll find that the system goes red in 2017.

And by the way, it is a pay-as-you-go system. Some people think it's a trust fund. The trust fund concept means we take your money; we hold it; and we give it back to you. No, this isn't the way it is. It is a pay-as-you-go. You pay. We go ahead and spend. [*Laughter*] You pay. We pay—you pay your payroll taxes, and we go ahead and pay for the benefits. And with money left over, we fund Federal programs. And all that's left is a file cabinet full of IOUs. Somebody told me that, and I went to West Virginia to see it for myself, and sure enough, it's still there—paper, promises. No, the system in 2017, goes in the red. In 2042, it's bankrupt.

So my first question to Members of Congress is, how can you go back to your districts, when you look at the facts, and stand up in front of young workers and look them in the eye and say, "Man, the future is

bright for you," knowing full well somebody is going to be paying payroll taxes into the system that's going broke? I certainly can't do that. And that's why I stood up in front of the Congress and said, "We've got a problem. Let's work together to fix it," and have gone around the country describing to the people the nature of the problem. The system is going broke is what is the problem.

Secondly, I've done something most Presidents haven't done and that is put out some solutions. First of all, if you were born prior to 1950, nothing is going to change for you, and that's important for those of you who are interested in the subject to remind your mothers and fathers or some of the elderly in your districts—nothing changes. I understand older people don't like change, and therefore, when they hear, Social Security reform, it makes them nervous. As a matter of fact, some folks who don't want to see any Social Security reform at all have used that leverage—they go into people's districts and say, "George W. is going to take your check away." It's not going to happen. There's plenty of money for the senior citizens.

It's the younger workers who are coming up who better be paying attention to this issue. It's the younger folks who are coming up who are going to have to pay for people like me who are going to live longer and get more benefits than the previous generation. And so I said, "Why don't we go ahead and come up with a system that says you're going to get your benefits if you're a poor person based upon wage increases, and if you're a wealthy person, you get your benefits that increase based upon the cost of living increases, and you scale it in between?" And that solution or that suggestion nearly solves all of the permanency problems in Social Security. Listen, if you're a younger—somebody told me about a survey about the younger folks said they're more likely to see a UFO than a Social Security check. [*Laughter*] Well, if you believe that, it seems like it makes sense to have a system that if you're doing all right, it increases your benefits based upon cost of living. That means you're going to get a check, and it's going to be at least increasing at the rate of cost of living.

We've got a lot of politics in Washington these days, though. People don't want to discuss the idea. It's kind of zero-sum up there when it comes to big issues. By the way, as we're talking about how to make the system permanently fixed, seems like to me now is the time to make sure it turns out to be a better deal for younger workers too. I strongly believe that younger workers ought to be allowed to take some of their own money and put it in a personal savings account, so they can watch their money grow at a rate greater than that which the Government can grow their money, a personal account they call their own, a personal account the Government cannot spend, a personal account they can pass on to whomever they want.

We believe in ownership. We understand that the more people that own their home or own their own business or own and manage their own health care account or own and manage their own retirement account, the more people that do that, the better off America is. If you own something, you have a vital stake in the future of this country. Now is the time to permanently fix Social Security, and now is the time to trust people with their own money, to give people a chance to build an asset base they call their own.

I told you about old Johnny Breaux and his tax reform. When Congress gets back, I think they ought to do two things. One, I think they ought to make the tax cuts we passed permanent. And that includes getting rid of the death tax forever. And as I mentioned, I'm looking forward to the tax simplification ideas. It's not going to be easy, but it's necessary. And John is a good man, and he'll work with his fellow citizens on that panel, both Republicans

and Democrats, to propose some interesting ideas for the administration and Congress to look at. It's important. It's a big idea, and it's a necessary idea.

I'll tell you another big idea. We've got to do something about our immigration laws. Our obligation is to secure the borders. We've got to make sure that we have the resources and technologies available for our Border Patrol agents. We've got to make sure we have a focused strategy to prevent people, goods, drugs, whatever, being smuggled into this country. That's one of our duties. And I meet with Chertoff quite frequently. He's the head of the Homeland Security. We do talk about how best to modernize the border security. One way to protect this border is to recognize that people are sneaking in here to work. And I believe that if you are a willing employer—in other words, if you have somebody looking for work and you can't find an American, there ought to be a legal way, not an illegal way, a legal way for you to be able to employ that person.

Listen, we'd rather have people coming in with a card that said, "I'm a legal worker," than trying to sneak across the border. And we've got people being smuggled across—there is a whole smuggling network and a network of forgers and document falsifiers that are trying to beat the system. It seems rational to me that says there ought to be a way to let somebody come and do jobs Americans won't do, on a temporary basis.

I've heard all kinds of talk about amnesty. I'm against amnesty. I think amnesty would be a mistake. But I do think it would be good to make sure our employers who are looking for workers are able to find people who are willing to do the jobs they have in a legal way. I'd rather our Border Patrol agents be looking for terrorists and drugs and guns being smuggled across our border, and people here—coming here to work have a legal way to do so on a temporary basis.

So immigration reform is going to be an interesting subject when we get back to Washington, DC. I'm looking forward to the topic. I also want to talk to you about national security. Make no mistake about it, we are at war. We're at war with an enemy that attacked us on September the 11th, 2001. We're at war against an enemy that, since that day, has continued to kill. They have killed in Madrid and Istanbul and Jakarta and Casablanca and Riyadh and Bali and London and elsewhere.

These are ideologues. These people have an ideology. It's really different from ours. We believe in human rights and human dignity and minority rights and rights for women and rights to worship freely. That's what we believe. We believe in a lot of rights for people. These killers don't. They have a narrow view of life. They have taken a great religion and converted it to their own vision. They have goals. They want to drive us out of parts of the world. They want the free world to retreat so they can topple governments. They want to be able to do in parts of the world that which they did in Afghanistan, take over a government, impose their negative, dark vision on people.

Remember what life was like in Afghanistan. It's hard for the Western mind to even comprehend what life was like for people in Afghanistan, but this is a society in which young girls couldn't go to school. And if you objected to their point of view, you were taken into the public square and whipped or sometimes assassinated. There was no freedom. The only people that were free were the tyrants and the dictators, those who imposed their view of the world. This is their vision, and they would like to see that vision spread. Make no mistake about it, this is a war against people who profess an ideology, and they use terror as a means to achieve their objectives.

After September the 11th, I made a commitment to the American people that the United States of America will not wait

to be attacked again. We will take the fight to the enemy, and we will defend our freedom.

To win this war on terror, we will use all elements of national power. We will use our military. For those of you who have got loved ones in the military, I want to thank you—tell them to thank—you thank them for me, on behalf of a grateful nation.

We'll use our diplomatic corps. In other words, we're working with friends and allies. Part of winning this war on terror is to remind others of what's at stake and to work diplomatically to get people to keep pressure on the enemy. We've got our Treasury Department working with our friends and allies to cut off money. One way to defeat the enemy is deny them access to money. And when we find money being spent illegally or funding these terrorist organizations that funnel money to these killers, we do something about it.

We're beefing up our intelligence here in America. We want to make sure that FBI and CIA can share intelligence. We want to make sure that we not only get the best intelligence, we analyze it properly, and we share it with our friends and allies and vice versa.

See, it's a different kind of war. In the old days, you'd have armies that were funded by States. You knew where they were. You could trace them. This war is against killers who hide, and then they show up and kill innocent life, and then they retreat. And so you've got to have good intelligence in order to defeat them. We're working hard to coordinate law enforcement around the world. In other words, we're using all assets of this great Nation in order to defeat this enemy.

We're making progress in defending the homeland. We've more than tripled homeland—funding for the homeland security since 2001. I'm sure some of you, in your States and local communities, have seen some of that money come down to help our first-responders be trained and to be equipped. I'm proud to report that the House of Representatives and the Senate renewed parts of the PATRIOT Act, permanently, and a small part of the PATRIOT Act will be sunsetted.

This is an important piece of legislation. It was passed overwhelmingly right after September the 11th, and it's been used effectively by our Government. You see, the PATRIOT Act did several things. One, it allowed law enforcement to share intelligence with the enforcement side of their operations. The FBI couldn't talk to each other before the PATRIOT Act. You couldn't have your intelligence division sharing information with your law enforcement division. It didn't make any sense, but that's the way it was. And the PATRIOT Act ended that. It tore down walls. It allows parts of our Government to share information with one another.

The PATRIOT Act, in essence, gave our terror fighters the same tools that our Government has given our drug fighters. The PATRIOT Act enables us to more effectively defend the homeland, and it does not usurp your rights under the Constitution. Every tool we use has got the scrutiny within the guidelines of the Constitution. The PATRIOT Act is important. I'm looking forward to the House and the Senate to reconcile their differences and get a PATRIOT Act to my desk as soon as possible. Our law enforcement officials must have the tools to protect the United States of America.

And we're making progress here at home. We've broken up terrorist cells in America. We've broken up networks, financing networks in America, in places like California, Oregon, Illinois, North Carolina, New York, New Jersey, Virginia, Florida, and other States. There are a lot of people working hard on our citizens' behalf to protect this homeland. The best way to protect the homeland, however, is to stay on the offense, is to bring the enemy to justice before they come to our shores. And that's precisely the second part of our strategy. We're fighting the enemy in Afghanistan.

We're fighting them in Iraq. We're defeating them there so we do not have to face them here. And our troops are doing great work.

Iraq is the latest battlefield in the war on terror. Foreign fighters are going into Iraq to fight coalition troops for a reason. They understand the stakes. A free Iraq in the heart of the Middle East will deal a serious blow to their hateful ideology. A democracy in the heart of the Middle East will be a major blow to their desire to spread an ideology that's hateful and dark and negative.

The violence in recent days in Iraq is a grim reminder of the enemies we face. These terrorists and insurgents will use brutal tactics because they're trying to shake the will of the United States of America. That's what they are trying to do. They want us to retreat. They want us, in our compassion for the innocent—say, "We're through." That's what they want. They will fail. They do not understand the character and the strength of the United States of America. They do not understand our desire to protect ourselves, to protect our friends, protect our allies, and to spread freedom around the world.

Our men and women who have lost their lives in Iraq and Afghanistan and in this war on terror have died in a noble cause, in a selfless cause. Their families can know that American citizens pray for them. And the families can know that we will honor their loved one's sacrifice by completing the mission, by laying the foundations for peace for generations to come.

We have a strategy for success in Iraq. On the one hand, we've got a military strategy, and we'll continue to hunt down the terrorists, as we train Iraqi forces so they can defend their own country. As Iraqis stand up, Americans and coalition forces will stand down. And we're making progress. More and more Iraqi units are more and more capable of defending themselves.

You know, my—I hear all the time, "Well, when are you bringing the troops home?" And my answer to you is: Soon as possible, but not before the mission is complete. Why would a Commander in Chief—it makes no sense for the Commander in Chief to put out a timetable. We're at war. We're facing an enemy that is ruthless. And if we put out a timetable, the enemy would adjust their tactics.

The timetable is this—and you can tell your Guard troops and reserve troops and mothers and dads of those serving—the timetable depends on our ability to train the Iraqis, to get the Iraqis ready to fight. And then our troops are coming home with the honor they have earned.

At the same time, we're helping that country defend itself and training its troops, there's a political track. A democracy is beginning to grow. I don't know about you, but when those 8 million-plus Iraqis went to the polls, it was an amazing moment. You know, I believe this, and at the heart of much of my policy is this firm belief, that freedom is the gift of an Almighty to every person in this world. It doesn't matter who you are. Embedded in your soul is the deep desire to live in freedom. That's what I believe. And if you believe that, then you shouldn't be all that surprised when, if given a chance, 8 million-plus people, in defiance of car bombers and killers and terrorists, said loud and clear to the world, "We want to be free. We want to live in a democracy. We want a government that listens to us and doesn't tell us what to do."

And it's that movement toward freedom that frightens the enemy. It's that movement toward a free society in which people of different religious persuasions can live in peace together. It scares—it's that movement that says, women have got equal rights with men that frightens these people.

But that movement is going forward. They're in the process now of arguing about a constitution. I don't know if you've read our American history much, about

when we were writing our Constitution. You know, if there had been that much scrutiny when we were writing our Constitution as has been given to their—scrutiny when they're writing their constitution, a lot of people would have said it's never going to get written. It was not an easy deal for our Forefathers, our Founders to get consensus on our Constitution. But nevertheless, they worked hard and came up with a great Constitution.

That's what the Iraqis are doing. They're coming up with a doctrine that will survive the years so that self-government and freedom prevail. And then they'll be voting on the document in October. And then they'll elect a permanent government in November. Democracy is moving forward, and that's part of laying the foundation for peace.

We have done this type of work before in our Nation. We have fought evil before. We have been through ideological struggles. Your dads and granddads fought against the Nazis and fought against the Japanese. It was an ideological struggle against an enemy that was ruthless. And we prevailed. We prevailed in more ways than one. We prevailed militarily, but we also helped spread democracy. We laid that foundation for peace for the next generation coming up.

Do you know that one of my best friends in the international community is the Prime Minister of Japan? Isn't that interesting? The Prime Minister of Japan, Prime Minister Koizumi, and I work together on North Korea and Iraq and Afghanistan. He's an ally. He's a good buddy. It wasn't all that long ago that my dad and your dads and granddads were at war with the Japanese, in a brutal war. They were the enemy. But something happened in between, something other than a military victory happened in between. And what happened was, was that Japan embraced a democracy. It wasn't an American democracy. It was a Japanese democracy, but it was a democracy.

And it turns out, if you look at history, democracies are peaceful nations. The spread of democracy yields peace. What you're seeing on your TV screens today is the work of brave soldiers and diplomats and coalition partners, spreading democracy, defeating a hateful ideology with an ideology of hope, an ideology that has got a clear vision for a better tomorrow for all its citizens. We've seen this work before, and we have prevailed because we have been steadfast and true to our beliefs.

And we'll prevail again. This Nation will be steadfast. This Nation will be strong. And this Nation, like other generations before us, will make sacrifices necessary to lay the foundation for peace for generations to come. We've got a big task in Washington, DC, and that's to remember the stakes of the war on terror and to do our duty and to be true to the principles of the greatest Nation on the face of the Earth.

I want to thank you for letting me come here today. May God bless you all, and may God continue to bless America.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:58 a.m. at the Gaylord Texan Resort and Convention Center. In his remarks, he referred to Earl Ehrhart, chairman, and Duane Parde, executive director, American Legislative Exchange Council; Tom Craddick, speaker, Texas State House of Representatives, and his wife, Nadine; and Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi of Japan.

The President's News Conference With President Alvaro Uribe Velez of Colombia in Crawford, Texas
August 4, 2005

President Bush. Thank you all. Welcome. Laura and I are very pleased to welcome President Uribe and his gracious wife, Lina, to our home here in Crawford. President Uribe is a strong and principled leader. I admire his determination. I appreciate his vision for a peaceful and prosperous Colombia.

Our two nations are working together to fight drug trafficking and terrorism and to promote security, democracy, and the rule of law throughout the Americas. President Uribe's leadership and the courage of the Colombian people are creating a bright future for Colombia. The Colombian Government implemented a comprehensive strategy, known as Plan Colombia, to reduce the illegal drug trade, revitalize Colombia's economy, strengthen its democratic institutions, and improve the security of its people. The United States provided critical assistance for Plan Colombia, and the plan is producing results.

Violent crime in Colombia is at its lowest level in 16 years. Since 2002, murders, kidnappings, and terrorist acts in Colombia have all declined significantly. Colombia is also making great progress in reforming its justice system. These gains in security and the rule of law are helping the Colombian economy grow by more than 4 percent last year. And as Colombia has improved its security and economy, it has also emerged as a leader in our hemisphere.

Colombia shares our commitment to advancing economic growth, trade, and democracy in the Americas. Colombia is also sharing its expertise with Afghanistan to combat terrorism and narco-trafficking in that new democracy. And America is very grateful for your support.

America will continue to stand with the people of Colombia. I will ask the Congress to sustain our commitment to follow-on programs for Plan Colombia so Colombia can build on its progress and win its war against the narco-terrorists. Our strategic partnership is vital to the security, prosperity, and freedom of both our countries and the Americas.

Mr. President, thank you for your leadership. Thank you for your friendship, and welcome.

President Uribe. Mr. President, thank you very much, and I also want to thank your wife, Laura, and all of your team. Thank you for welcoming Lina, my delegation, and myself to your home here and for sharing with us here in this wonderful place in Texas.

As you have well said, both of our countries have a strategic relationship that is based on mutual trust, which is aimed at deepening democracy, at combating terrorism, and on building social cohesion. Our agenda is very important for the present and the future of both of our peoples so that Colombia can free itself from the scourge of terrorism.

The great enemy of Colombian democracy is terrorism. And our great partner in defeating terrorism has been the Government and the people of the United States. Allow me to say here to the rest of the world that U.S. cooperation has been exemplary. It has gone beyond rhetoric, and it has, in fact, been cooperation that has been put in practice. And all democratic countries need to know that, that cooperation should be realistic and put into practice.

We have made progress, and we are winning, but we have not won yet. And that is why it is important to continue with this cooperation, as you have said, that you have asked from the Congress, President Bush. We cannot leave this task half-finished. We must take it all the way to the end. We

need a definitive victory for both democratic peoples of Colombia and the United States, and also, we must keep that objective in mind as we build upon our results to keep moving forward to that final goal.

We trust that we will soon be able to announce the successful completion of our free trade agreement, an agreement built on trust, an agreement that can help bring our democratic peoples closer together and in more solidarity. The key word in Colombia today is "trust." This is the mutual trust that is the basis of the relationship with the United States. It is trust that we want to create among Colombian people themselves.

So that Colombians can gain trust in their homeland, we are working on five elements of a modern democracy. Number one is democratic security, security for all citizens, security for pluralism, security for all ideas and for all citizens.

The second element is respect for public freedom. In Colombia we've had a dictatorship of terrorism, but the people, the Government, and the nation of Colombia that are fighting terrorism will do so by respecting public freedom. They want to serve as an example, because that's the difference between what has happened in our country and in other Latin American countries, where it was government dictatorships. Here we have a democratic government that has full respect for public freedom and that fully intends to defeat terrorism.

The third element is to build social cohesion, which is necessary in order to have sustainable democracy and a sustainable security policy. The election of Ambassador Moreno as President of the IDB represents a great opportunity for our continent. It represents a new hope for us to combat poverty and to build social cohesion.

The fourth element is transparency. The fifth is respect for the independence of institutions. Transparency in public affairs, transparency in friendship, transparency in partnership and in agreement and in disagreement—transparency is critical for modern democracies in order for the people to have trust in the government that guides them.

The fifth element is respect for the independence of our institutions, which is important for the rule of law. This is critical for a modern democracy. Colombia deepens its respect for its independent institutions, especially now that we're combating—in this moment of time, when we're combating terrorism.

Thank you once again, President Bush, for your friendship, for your solidarity, and you honor us by welcoming us here to your home.

President Bush. We'll answer two questions a side. Nedra [Nedra Pickler, Associated Press].

Space Shuttle Discovery

Q. Thank you, Mr. President. The *Discovery* Space Shuttle mission has been dominated by repairs and questions about safety. Do you think the return to space was premature? And are you worried about *Discovery*'s return next week?

President Bush. First of all, I had the honor of speaking to the folks of—that are on that mission. And it was a great experience to be talking to bold explorers. And secondly, like a lot of Americans, I was amazed at the procedures that took place to repair the craft. It's pretty remarkable. I believe that the mission is important, and I know that the mission directors will make the right decision about how to proceed.

Ours is a country that values the safety of our citizens, particularly those we ask to take risk in space. And there will be a lot of deliberation, a lot of thought that goes into the decision as to whether or not those brave souls can—should return on that vehicle. And I know that NASA has been very closely in touch with the White House. Andy Card has been in touch with the Administrator on a regular basis. But I've got the confidence—all the confidence that they will make the right decision.

Let me also say that it is important for our fellow citizens to understand that we're going to take the NASA mission beyond the current mission, that we'll be using—we want—the plan right now is to phase out the shuttle by 2010 and then begin to put a strategy in place that will use the moon as a launching spot for further exploration.

I know the—at least the people I've talked to inside NASA are excited about the mission, the reinvigoration of the vision of exploration. And I appreciate the Administrator working on getting that strategy in place, so that when the decision is made to finally get rid of this phase of exploration, we'll be ready to take on the new phase. And that's important for the American people to understand, that, one, exploration is important; two, there will be some good coming out of exploration; and, three, that we've got a new vision embraced by NASA and its pioneers.

Go ahead and ask a question.

Human Rights and Terrorism in Colombia

Q. If you could answer in Spanish, that will be great. But really, either one of you can answer. I was wondering if Venezuela came up at all and whether or not you had a chance to discuss the advances in human rights investigations in Colombia?

[*At this point, President Uribe answered the question in Spanish, and no translation was provided.*]

Q. Did you discuss Venezuela and human rights?

[*President Uribe answered the question in Spanish.*]

Q. Mr. President——

President Bush. Hold on a second. Why don't you translate that, please.

Interpreter. Colombia's threat from terrorism—Colombia faces a threat from terrorism from—funded by drug trafficking. This is a threat that can affect the entire neighborhood, that can affect our entire continent. Because when Colombian terrorists cannot kidnap within our borders, they're forced to kidnap outside in our neighboring countries. This terrorism—this kind of terrorism knows no limits; it knows no ethics. And that is why it must be defeated in Colombia. And we must do this by getting cooperation from our neighboring countries. And that is what we aspire to at the highest levels.

As far as our human rights, this was discussed with great seriousness and with great respect. Our security policy must be sustainable. In order for it to be sustainable, there must be respect for human rights, and there must be transparency so that it can be respected by public opinion. The respect for human rights needs transparency. This is what we work for in Colombia every day.

President Bush. Steve [Steve Holland, Reuters].

Zawahiri Videotape/War on Terror

Q. Thanks, sir. Al Qaida's number two, Dr. Al-Zawahiri, is warning that attacks will continue until U.S. troops leave Iraq. How serious a threat is this? And after so many marines were killed this week, what's being done to improve their safety?

President Bush. First, let me say that we mourn the loss of every fallen troop. And the community outside of Cleveland, Brook Park, Ohio, suffered mightily over the last couple of days. It's—the people of Brook Park and the family members of those who lost their life, I hope they can take comfort in the fact that millions of their fellow citizens pray for them. I hope they also take comfort in the understanding that the sacrifice was made in a noble cause.

We're laying the foundation of peace for generations to come. We're defeating the terrorists in a place like Iraq so we don't have to face them here at home. And as well we're spreading democracy and freedom to parts of the world that are desperate for democracy and freedom.

The comments by the number-two man of Al Qaida make it clear that Iraq is a part of this war on terror, and we're at war. In other words, he's saying, "Leave." As I have told the American people, one, that people like Zawahiri have an ideology that is dark, dim, backwards; they don't trust—they don't appreciate women. If you don't agree to their narrow view of a religion, you'll be whipped in the public square. That's their view, and they have tactics to help spread that view. In other words, they've got goals. They want to spread that point of view throughout the world, starting in the broader Middle East. And part of their goal is to drive us out of the broader Middle East, precisely what this Zawahiri said. In other words, he's threatening.

They have come up against a nation that, one, will defend itself. Zawahiri is a part of that team that attacked us on September the 11th, 2001. He was part of an Al Qaida group that said, "Well, we'll try to achieve our objective in attacking America." They must not have understood the nature of our country. I vowed then that we would stay on the offense against these people. We owe it to the American people and other freedom-loving countries to bring these killers to justice. And that's what they are: They're terrorists, and they're killers. And they will kill innocent people, trying to get us to withdraw from the world so they can impose their dark vision on the world. That's what they're trying to do. And the comments today by Mr. Zawahiri absolutely reinforce what I've just told you.

We will stay the course; we will complete the job in Iraq. And the job is this: We'll help the Iraqis develop a democracy. They're writing—in the process of writing a constitution, which will be ratified in October, and then they will elect a permanent government. It's also important for our citizens to understand that progress has been made, particularly when 8-plus million people got to vote in the face of Zawahiri and Zarqawi and these killers.

We're also training Iraqis. Our troops will come home as soon as possible. "As soon as possible" means when those Iraqis are prepared to fight. As Iraq stands up, our coalition will stand down.

The Iraqis want to live in a free society. Zawahiri doesn't want them to live in a free society. And that's the clash of ideologies, freedom versus tyranny. We have had these kinds of clashes before, and we have prevailed. We have prevailed because we're right. We have prevailed because we adhere to a hopeful philosophy, and we have prevailed because we would not falter.

Go ahead and ask——

Human Rights in Colombia

Q. Also the question is for President Bush. Did you talk about the necessity and the importance of the creation of international community that can verify the application of the justice and peace law and also its implementation?

President Bush. We did talk about human rights. I talked about human rights. The Secretary of State *Arroz*—[*laughter*]—talked about human rights. The President assured us—a couple of points that are important to understand—one, that there is an independent judiciary, in other words, independent from Government, that will adjudicate these disputes; secondly, that there is a new prosecutor reporting to the independent judiciary that will follow through on the cases; and, thirdly, that he is committed to seeing to it as best as possible that progress be made on these cases.

And we talked about specific cases. And I listened intently and believe that he is interested in following through on these cases, so that the world will hear loud and clear that Colombia is a nation of law and human rights and human dignity.

[*President Uribe answered the question in Spanish, and no translation was provided.*]

President Bush. Yo le comprendo. Vamos a comer. [*Laughter*] I told him I understood him. We're going to go eat. Thank you very much. Appreciate you. *Gracias.*

Q. What's on the menu? What's on the menu?

President Bush. Carne.

Q. Carne.

President Bush. Necesito preguntar a mi esposa. I've been thinking about business. She's been thinking about the food.

NOTE: The President's news conference began at 11:47 a.m. at the Bush Ranch. In his remarks, he referred to National Aeronautics and Space Administration Administrator Sean O'Keefe; Ayman Al-Zawahiri, founder of the Egyptian Islamic Jihad and senior Al Qaida associate; senior Al Qaida associate Abu Musab Al Zarqawi; and Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice. President Uribe referred to Columbia's Ambassador to the U.S. Luis Alberto Moreno Mejia, President-elect, Inter-American Development Bank. President Uribe spoke in Spanish, and his remarks were translated by an interpreter, except where noted above.

The President's Radio Address
August 6, 2005

Good morning. As families across the country enjoy the summer, Americans can be optimistic about our economic future.

In the past 4 years, our economy has been through a lot. We faced a stock market decline, a recession, corporate scandals, an attack on our homeland, and the demands of an ongoing war on terror. To grow the economy and help American families, we acted by passing the largest tax relief in a generation. And today, thanks to the tax relief and the efforts of America's workers and entrepreneurs, our economy is strong and growing stronger.

This past week, we learned that America added over 200,000 new jobs in July. Since May of 2003, we've added nearly 4 million new jobs. The unemployment rate is down to 5 percent, below the average of the 1970s, 1980s, and 1990s. And more Americans are working today than ever before in our Nation's history.

Recent economic reports show that our economy is growing faster than any other major industrialized nation. Small businesses are flourishing. Workers are taking home more of what they earn. Real disposable personal income has grown by over 12 percent since the end of 2000. Inflation is low, and mortgage rates are low. And over the past year, the homeownership rate in America has reached record levels.

The tax relief stimulated economic vitality and growth, and it has helped increase revenues to the Treasury. The increased revenues and our spending restraint have led to good progress in reducing the Federal deficit. Last month we learned that the deficit is now projected to be $94 billion less than previously expected. I set a goal of cutting the deficit in half by 2009, and we are ahead of pace to meet that goal.

To continue creating jobs and to ensure that our prosperity reaches every corner of America, we're opening markets abroad for our goods and services. This past week, I was proud to sign the Central American-Dominican Republic Free Trade Agreement. This historic agreement will level the playing field for America's workers and farmers and open up a market of 44 million customers for products made in the United States.

To keep our economy growing, we also need affordable, reliable supplies of energy.

Next week in New Mexico, I'll sign a bipartisan energy bill that encourages conservation, expands domestic production in environmentally sensitive ways, diversifies our energy supply, modernizes our electricity grid, and makes America less dependent on foreign sources of energy. And next Wednesday in Illinois, I'll sign a highway bill that will improve the safety of our roads, strengthen our transportation infrastructure, and create good jobs.

Our economy is strong, yet I will not be satisfied until every American who wants to work can find a job. So this coming Tuesday, I will meet with my economic team in Texas to discuss our agenda to keep the economy moving forward. As Congress considers appropriations bills this fall, we will work with the House and the Senate to ensure that taxpayer dollars are spent wisely or not at all.

We need to make the tax relief permanent, end the death tax forever, and make our Tax Code simpler, fairer, and more progrowth. We'll continue working on Social Security reform. Social Security is sound for today's seniors, but there's a hole in the safety net for our younger workers, so I'll work with the Congress to strengthen Social Security for our children and grandchildren. I'll continue to press for legal reform to protect small businesses, doctors, and hospitals from junk lawsuits. And we will work to make health care more affordable and accessible for all Americans.

The American economy is the envy of the world, and we will keep it that way. We will continue to unleash the entrepreneurial spirit of America so more of our citizens can realize the American Dream.

Thank you for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 8:25 a.m. on August 5 at the Bush Ranch in Crawford, TX, for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on August 6. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on August 5 but was embargoed for release until the broadcast. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of this address.

Remarks in Waco, Texas, on the Death of Peter Jennings
August 8, 2005

Laura and I were saddened to learn about the death of Peter Jennings. Peter Jennings had a long and distinguished career as a news journalist. He covered many important events, events that helped define the world as we know it today. A lot of Americans relied upon Peter Jennings for their news. He became a part of the lives of a lot of our fellow citizens, and he will be missed. May God bless his soul.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:52 a.m. at Texas State Technical College. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Remarks on Signing the Energy Policy Act of 2005 in Albuquerque, New Mexico

August 8, 2005

Thank you all. Please be seated. Thanks very much for the warm welcome. I appreciate you treating a neighbor from Texas so kindly. [*Laughter*] I'm really proud to be here with the men and women of the Sandia National Laboratory. We just had a fascinating tour of the facility. It was a little quick, but I learned a lot, and I want to thank Tom Hunter for his hospitality and his enthusiasm for the projects that go on here and his praise for the people who work here.

I thank you for coming, and it's such an honor to be here. I know full well that the work you do here keeps our military strong, it keeps our Nation competitive, and our country is really grateful for your dedication and for the fact that you lend your expertise into helping Americans.

It is such an honor to be in New Mexico, the home State of Pete Domenici as well as Jeff Bingaman, to sign this bill. This bill will strengthen our economy, and it will improve our environment, and it's going to make this country more secure. The Energy Policy Act of 2005 is going to help every American who drives to work, every family that pays a power bill, and every small-business owner hoping to expand.

The bill is the result of years of effort. It is the result of good folks coming together, people who have made a commitment to deliver results for the American people. This bill launches an energy strategy for the 21st century, and I've really been looking forward to signing it.

I appreciate Pete Domenici's leadership on this bill. You know, he's the kind of fellow, when he makes up his mind to do something, it's hard to stop him. And as Pete said he's worked on a lot of energy bills in the past. Some of them were signed by Presidents, and some of them never made it to the desk. But he's been dogged in his determination to get a bill done, and he found a really fine partner in Joe Barton.

Joe Barton did an outstanding job as the chairman of the House Energy and Commerce Committee, and he did a really good job as the conference chairman. This bill is here in New Mexico because of the fine work of Joe Barton and Pete Domenici. And as Pete mentioned, Senator Jeff Bingaman gets a lot of credit as well. He knows the subject matter in the bill, and he's a proven leader on issues such as conservation and efficiency and renewable fuels and research and development. And Jeff, I, like Pete, I want to congratulate you for a job well done, and thank you for being here—[*applause*].

A member of the House Energy and Commerce Committee came on over, Ralph Hall, a great Congressman from the State of Texas. Ralph is a good friend. I think he came just to grab a cup of coffee on Air Force One, but—[*laughter*]—I'm proud to have him alongside. Thanks for coming, Ralph, and thanks for your vote.

I appreciate Congressman Steve Pearce from eastern New Mexico joining us. He and his wife, Cynthia, are with us. Thanks for coming, Steve. Appreciate your support on this bill. Good work. Thank you.

I put a good fellow to run the Energy Department in Sam Bodman. He's smart. He's capable. He's got a lot of experience. He knows what he's doing. He's going to be the right person to help implement this bill. And I want to thank Sam and his wife, Diane, for being here. Thank you all for coming.

I want to remind you about the fact that this economy of ours has been through a lot. And that's why it was important to get this energy bill done, to help us continue

to grow. We've been through a stock market decline. We went through a recession. We went through corporate scandals. We had an attack on our homeland, and we had the demands on an ongoing war on terror. And to grow this economy, we worked together to put together an economic growth policy, an economic growth package, the cornerstone of which was to cut the taxes on the American people. And that tax relief plan is working. This economy is strong, and it's growing stronger. And what this energy bill is going to do, it's just going to help keep momentum in the right direction so people can realize their dreams.

Last week we had some good news that America added just over 200,000 jobs—new jobs—in the month of July. Since May of 2003, we've added nearly 4 million new jobs. More Americans are working today than ever before in our Nation's history. Workers are taking more of what they earn—taking home more of what they earn. Inflation is low. Mortgage rates are low. Homeownership in America is at an alltime high. In other words, this economy is moving. And what this energy bill does is it recognizes that we need more affordable and reliable sources of energy in order to make sure the economy continues to grow.

It's an economic bill, but as Pete mentioned, it's also a national security bill. For more than a decade, America has gone without a national energy policy. It's hard to believe, isn't it? We haven't had a strategy in place. We've had some ideas, but we have not had a national energy policy. And as a result, our consumers are paying more for the price of their gasoline. Electricity bills are going up. We had a massive blackout two summers ago that cost this country billions of dollars and disrupted millions of lives. And because we didn't have a national energy strategy over time, with each passing year, we are more dependent on foreign sources of oil.

Now, solving these problems required a balanced approach. And that's the spirit that Pete and Jeff and Joe took into the—on to the floors of their respective bodies. They recognized that we need a comprehensive approach to deal with the situation we're in. In other words, we need to conserve more energy. We need to produce more energy. We need to diversify our energy supply, and we need to modernize our energy delivery. And so they worked hard and listened to a lot of good ideas, and they've taken really important steps.

Now, one of the things that I appreciate about the people on the stage here is that they were able to set aside kind of the partisan bickering that oftentimes—too many times—deadlocks Washington, DC. In other words, they said, "Let's get something done for the good of the country." And that's an important spirit. That's what the American people expect. I know the people in New Mexico expect people to go up to Washington, DC, and work together for the common good. And that's exactly what this bill has done.

These Members, when they say they're going to strengthen our economy and protect our environment and help our national security, are telling it like it is. And let me tell you why. First, the bill makes an unprecedented commitment to energy conservation and efficiency—an unprecedented commitment. The bill sets higher efficiency standards for Federal buildings and for household products. It directs the Department of Transportation to study the potential for sensible improvements in fuel-efficiency standards for cars and trucks and SUVs. It authorizes new funding for research into cutting-edge technologies that will help us do more with less energy.

The bill recognizes that America is the world's leader in technology and that we've got to use technology to be the world's leader in energy conservation. The bill includes incentives for consumers to be better conservers of energy. If you own a home, you can receive new tax credits to install energy-efficient windows and appliances. If you're in the market for a car,

this bill will help you save up to $3,500 on a fuel-efficient hybrid or clean-diesel vehicle. And the way the tax credit works is that the more efficient the vehicle is, the more money you will save. Energy conservation is more than a private virtue; it's a public virtue. And with this bill I sign today, America is taking the side of consumers who make the choice to conserve.

Second, this bill will allow America to make cleaner and more productive use of our domestic energy resources, including coal and nuclear power and oil and natural gas. By using these reliable sources to supply more of our own energy, we'll reduce our reliance on energy from foreign countries, and that will help this economy grow so people can work.

Coal is America's most abundant energy resource. It accounts for more than one-half of our electricity production. The challenge is to develop ways to take advantage of our coal resources while keeping our air clean.

When I ran for President in 2000, I promised to invest—or asked the Congress to invest $2 billion over 10 years to promote clean coal technology. So far, working with the United States Congress, we've provided more than $1.3 billion for research in the innovative ways to improve today's coal plants and to help us build even cleaner coal plants in the future. And the bill I sign today authorizes new funding for clean coal technology so we can move closer to our goal of building the world's first zero emission coal-fired powerplant.

Nuclear power is another of America's most important sources of electricity. Of all our Nation's energy sources, only nuclear powerplants can generate massive amounts of electricity without emitting an ounce of air pollution or greenhouse gases. And thanks to the advances in science and technology, nuclear plants are far safer than ever before. Yet America has not ordered a nuclear plant since the 1970s. To coordinate the ordering of new plants, the bill I sign today continues the Nuclear Power 2010 Partnership between Government and industry. It also offers a new form of Federal risk insurance for the first six builders of new nuclear powerplants. With the practical steps in this bill, America is moving closer to a vital national goal. We will start building nuclear powerplants again by the end of this decade.

Meeting the needs of our growing economy also means expanding our domestic production of oil and natural gas, which are vital fuels for transportation and electricity and manufacturing. The energy bill makes practical reforms to the oil and gas permitting process to encourage new exploration in environmentally sensitive ways.

The bill authorizes research into the prospects of unlocking vast amounts of now—energy now trapped in shale and tar sands. It provides incentives for oil refineries to expand their capacity, and that's consumer-friendly. The more supply, the more reliable your gasoline will be and the more—less pressure on price.

The bill includes tax incentives to encourage new construction of natural gas pipelines. It clarifies Federal authority to site new receiving terminals for liquified natural gas, so that consumers across this Nation can benefit from more affordable, clean-burning natural gas.

Thirdly, the bill I sign today will help diversify our energy supply by promoting alternative and renewable energy sources. The bill extends tax credits for wind, biomass, landfill gas, and other renewable electricity sources. The bill offers new incentives to promote clean, renewable geothermal energy. It creates a new tax credit for residential solar power systems. And by developing these innovative technologies, we can keep the lights running while protecting the environment and using energy produced right here at home. When you hear us talking about less dependence on foreign sources of energy, one of the ways to become less dependent is to enhance the use of renewable sources of energy.

The bill also will lead to a greater diversity of fuels for cars and trucks. The bill includes tax incentives for producers of ethanol and biodiesel. The bill includes a flexible, cost-effective renewable fuel standard that will double the amount of ethanol and biodiesel in our fuel supply over the next 7 years. Using ethanol and biodiesel will leave our air cleaner. And every time we use a home-grown fuel, particularly these, we're going to be helping our farmers and, at the same time, be less dependent on foreign sources of energy.

I used to like to kid, but I really wasn't kidding when I said, "Some day a President is going to pick up the crop report"—[*laughter*]—"and they're going to say, we're growing a lot of corn, and—or soybeans—and the first thing that's going to pop in the President's mind is, we're less dependent on foreign sources of energy." It makes sense to promote ethanol and biodiesel.

The bill I sign today also includes strong support for hydrogen fuel technology. When hydrogen is used in a fuel cell, it can power consumer products from computers to cell phones to cars that emit pure water instead of exhaust fumes. I laid out a hydrogen fuel initiative, and I want to thank the Members of Congress for adding to the momentum of this initiative through this energy bill. The goal of the research and development for hydrogen-powered automobiles is to make it possible for today's children to take their driver's test in a pollution-free car.

Fourth, the energy bill will help ensure that consumers receive electricity over dependable modern infrastructure. The bill removes outdated obstacles to investment in electricity transmission lines in generating facilities. The bill corrects the provision of the law that made electric reliability standards optional instead of mandatory. Most of you probably consider it mandatory that the lights come on when you flip a switch. [*Laughter*] Now the utility companies will have to consider it mandatory as well. [*Laughter*]

To keep local disputes from causing national problems, the bill gives Federal officials the authority to select sites for new powerlines. We have a modern interstate grid for our phone line and our highways. With this bill, America can start building a modern 21st century electricity grid as well.

The bill I sign today is a critical first step. It's a first step toward a more affordable and reliable energy future for the American citizens. This bill is not going to solve our energy challenges overnight. Most of the serious problems, such as high gasoline costs or the rising dependence on foreign oil, have developed over decades. It's going to take years of focused effort to alleviate those problems. But in about 2 minutes, we're going to have a strategy that will help us do that.

And as we work to solve our energy dependence—dependency, we've got to remember that the market for energy is global, and America is not the only large consumer of hydrocarbons. As the economies of nations like India and China grow rapidly, their demand for energy is growing rapidly as well. It's in our interest to help these expanding energy users become more efficient, less dependent on hydrocarbons. You see, by helping them achieve these goals, it will take pressure off the global supply, and it will help take pressure off price for American consumers.

And so, last month, I joined with the leaders of India and China and Australia and Japan and South Korea to create a new Asia Pacific Partnership on Clean Development. This is an innovative program which is authorized by this energy bill. And through it, our goal is to spread the use of clean, efficient energy technologies throughout the Pacific Rim.

After years of debate and division, Congress passed a good bill. It's my honor to have come to the great State of New Mexico to sign it. I'm confident that one day Americans will look back on this bill as a vital step toward a more secure and more

prosperous nation that is less dependent on foreign sources of energy.

Thank you for coming.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:26 a.m. in the Schiff Auditorium at the Sandia National Laboratory. In his remarks, he referred to Thomas O. Hunter, president, Sandia Corp., and director, Sandia National Laboratories. H.R. 6, approved August 8, was assigned Public Law No. 109–58.

Statement on Signing the Energy Policy Act of 2005
August 8, 2005

Today, I have signed into law H.R. 6, the "Energy Policy Act of 2005." This legislation promotes dependable, affordable, and environmentally sound production and distribution of energy for America's future.

The executive branch shall construe section 365(e)(2) of the Act, which purports to require disclosure of an internal executive branch recommendation, in a manner consistent with the President's constitutional authority to supervise the unitary executive branch and preserve the confidentiality of its deliberations.

The executive branch shall construe the statement in section 110(d) of the Act, that the Congress reserves the right to revert to previous schedules for daylight savings time, as referring to reversion by enactment of a law in accordance with the bicameral passage and presentment requirements specified in the Constitution.

The executive branch shall construe the amendments to section 211 of the Energy Reorganization Act made by section 629 of the Act, as they relate to dissemination of official information by employees of the Department of Energy and the Nuclear Regulatory Commission, in a manner consistent with the President's constitutional authority to supervise the unitary executive branch.

The executive branch shall construe provisions of the Act that purport to direct the conduct of communications, negotiations, and other relations with foreign governments and international organizations, including sections 643(c)(2), 795(d), 814, 972, and 985 of the Act, and sections 732, 734(a)(2), 736, and 737 of the Global Environmental Protection Assistance Act as contained in section 1611 of the Act, in a manner consistent with the Constitution's commitment to the President of authority to conduct the Nation's foreign relations.

Provisions of the Act, including sections 342(j), 351(h)(3), 704(c), 706(e)(5), 957(a)(2)(C), 1221(b), 1234(c), 1272(2), 1509(b)(2), 1541(c)(6), 1831(c), 1835, and 1836(b)(2), section 543(a)(3) of the National Energy Conservation Policy Act contained in section 102(b), and section 170H(f)(3)(B) of the Atomic Energy Act of 1954 contained in section 651(d)(1), purport to require executive branch officials to submit legislative recommendations to the Congress. The executive branch shall construe such provisions in a manner consistent with the Constitution's commitment to the President of the authority to submit for the consideration of the Congress such measures as the President judges necessary and expedient and to supervise the unitary executive branch.

The executive branch shall construe the reference in section 631(b) of the Act, to awaiting action by the Congress, as providing for the Congress a reasonable period of time to consider the information furnished under section 631, as it is plain from the text and structure of section 631 that the reference is not intended to function as a prohibition.

The executive branch shall construe section 9007 of the Solid Waste Disposal Act, contained in section 1528 of the Act, in a manner consistent with the various legal immunities conferred by the Constitution on members of the legislative, executive, and judicial branches of the Federal Government to protect the effective functioning of the three branches.

The executive branch shall construe provisions of the Act that make legislative classifications based on race, ethnicity, or gender in a manner consistent with the requirement of the Due Process Clause of the Fifth Amendment to afford equal protection of the laws.

GEORGE W. BUSH

The White House,
August 8, 2005.

NOTE: H.R. 6, approved August 8, was assigned Public Law No. 109–58.

The President's News Conference in Crawford, Texas
August 9, 2005

The President. Thank you all for coming. As you can see, my economic team has come to Crawford, and we've just finished a very interesting discussion about our economy and what we need to do to make sure economic growth remains strong. After this press conference, we'll go over to the house and have a lunch and give us a chance to continue our dialog.

But before I begin in my discussion about the economy, I do want to congratulate the *Discovery* crew. Commander Collins and the pilot of that crew, James Kelly, did a fantastic job of bringing the craft, and most importantly the folks aboard the craft, home safely to California this morning. It was a great achievement. It's an important step for NASA to—as it regains the confidence of the American people and begins to transition to the new mission we set out for NASA. So, congratulations, Commander Collins. It's quite an achievement.

The economy of the United States is strong, and the foundation for sustained growth is in place. The economic agenda is based on the fundamental trust that the American people make good decisions for themselves and for their families. And that's why my policies allow more Americans to keep more of what they earn, to have more control over their daily lives, from health care to education to their retirement. It makes sense to trust people with their own money.

I'm pleased to report that the strategy is working. The economy is growing faster than any other major industrialized country. Job growth is strong. We added over 200,000 new jobs in July. This country has added nearly 4 million new jobs since May of 2003. The unemployment rate is 5 percent, which is below the average of the 1970s, 1980s, and 1990s. Americans have more money in their pocket, and that's good news.

There's still some challenges to the economy, and it's important for the American people to know we understand there are challenges, and we're acting to meet them. First of all, we have a challenge when it comes to energy. Yesterday in New Mexico, I signed an energy bill. I'll repeat today what I said yesterday, and that is, this bill isn't going to lower people's gasoline prices overnight, but it is—the bill does lay out a strategy to help us conserve more, to produce more in environmentally friendly ways, to use renewable sources of energy,

all aimed at protecting our economic security and national security. The more we diversify our—the energy sector, the less dependent we are on foreign sources of energy.

Secondly, we're opening up new markets. In order to keep this economy growing, we've got to make sure we have not only free trade, but fair trade. The CAFTA vote is an important vote because it opened up new markets for 44 million consumers. That's going to be good for our farmers and entrepreneurs and small-business people. We discussed the need to continue advancing free and fair trade at the—during the Doha round discussions that will be held in Hong Kong later this year.

In order to make sure the economy continues to grow, we've got to continue to work with Congress to reduce our deficit. The Federal deficit is projected to be $94 billion less than previously expected, and that's thanks to a combination of tax relief, which got our economy growing, and spending restraint. We're ahead of pace to cut the deficit in half by 2009. And it's very important for Congress, as they work on the appropriations bills, to adhere to the budgets that they passed so that we can continue to send the signals to people around the country that we're serious about being fiscally responsible with the people's money.

We need to have certainty in the Tax Code. That's why I strongly believe that the tax relief we passed must be permanent, the death tax repealed forever. And at the same time, I look forward to working with the Tax Reform Commission to develop a simpler code that's a fairer code and one that encourages economic growth.

In order to make sure this economy continues to grow, we got to do something about the lawsuits that are making it difficult for our entrepreneurs and small-business people. I had the honor of signing a class-action reform. Congress needs to pass asbestos reform as well as medical liability reform.

Medical liability reform will help make health care costs more affordable and health care more accessible for our folks. And that leads me to our understanding that rising health care costs are a potential burden on economic growth and certainly a burden on many of our families. One way to deal with the costs is to do something about the frivolous lawsuits that are running up the cost of medicine.

I signed a patient's safety bill which will help reduce costs and, as importantly, medical errors. The Congress should pass association health plans so that small businesses can pool risk and expand health savings accounts at the same time. In other words, association health plans will help small businesses; health savings accounts will help individual consumers, help our families, but help small businesses, as well, better afford health care.

And finally on Social Security, look, we—in order to make sure this economy continues to grow, we have got to deal with problems now, to solve problems now, before they place an undue restraint on our families and an undue restraint on the ability to grow our economy. And Social Security is a—is a liability that—it needs to be addressed now.

Now, senior citizens must understand when I talk about Social Security reform that nothing will change for you. You'll get your check. But your grandchildren and your children are paying payroll taxes in the system that will be broke by 2041. And it's time to fix the system. Congress needs to understand the gravity of the situation. We have a serious problem. And I believe good leaders are those who stand up and address problems and not pass them on and hope that somebody else will come up and solve the problem.

Part of the solution for Social Security is to make sure that the poor do not retire into poverty, to make sure that people get benefits that grow at least with the rate of inflation—that will be, the wealthier citizens get benefits growing at the rate of

the cost of living, but poorer citizens should have their benefits go up by wage increases. And that reform alone will fix a lot of the solvency issue of Social Security.

And while we're fixing Social Security, I strongly believe younger workers ought to be allowed—given the chance to, given the opportunity to take some of their own money and set it aside in a personal savings account. And that will have two effects. One, it will increase savings throughout our society, which is important to economic growth and vitality. But more importantly, it will mean workers from all walks of life will be able to own an asset that they call their own and that the Government cannot take away.

And so we've had a wide-ranging discussion on these important problems and opportunities. We're confident about the future of the American economy because we're confident that the entrepreneurial spirit is strong here.

With that, I'll be glad to take a couple of questions from you. Yes, ma'am. That would be you, Deb [Deb Riechmann, Associated Press].

Iran

Q. Mr. President, on Iran, Iran is thumbing its nose at the United States and Europe by resuming their uranium conversion activities. So if Iran doesn't blink, what is the—does the United States want to see immediate referral to the Security Council and—for punitive sanctions? And if so, what should those sanctions look like?

The President. I appreciate that question. First of all, as you know, we have made strong steps. We've condemned strongly Iranians' attempt to develop any kind of program that would allow them to enrich uranium to develop a weapon. In other words, the Iranians said they were in compliance with certain international rules, and yet we found out they weren't in compliance of those rules. And so we're very deeply suspicious of their desires and called upon our friends in Europe, what's called the EU–3, Germany, France, and Great Britain, to lead the diplomatic efforts to convince the Iranians to give up their nuclear ambitions.

First of all, I want to applaud the EU–3 for being strong in their—in presenting a unified voice. Secondly, in terms of consequences if the Iranians continue to balk, we'll work with the EU–3. In other words, they're the lead negotiators on behalf of the free world, and we will work with them in terms of what consequences there may be. And certainly the United Nations is a potential consequence.

And I—just as I was walking in here, I received word that the new Iranian President said he was willing to get back to the table. Now, I don't want to put words in his mouth, and you're going to have to check that out before you print that in your story, but if he did say that, I think that's a positive sign that the Iranians are getting a message that it's not just the United States that's worried about their nuclear program, but the Europeans are serious in calling the Iranians to account and negotiating. I don't know if you've got that word or not. That's a positive development.

But we'll work with our friends on steps forward, on ways to deal with the Iranians if they so choose to ignore the demands of the world. It is important for the Iranians to understand that America stands squarely with the EU–3, that we feel strongly the Iranians need to adhere to the agreements made in the Paris accord, and that we will be willing to work with our partners on—in dealing with appropriate consequences should they ignore the demands.

Q. It sounds as if you're willing to give them more time to let this work out——

The President. Well, the man said he wanted to negotiate, and of course—again, we're working with the EU–3. They're the lead negotiators. In other words, our strategy has been all along to make—to work with Germany, France, and Great Britain

in terms of sending a strong signal and message to Iran. And today it looked like that the new Iranian leader has heard that message. We'll have to watch very carefully, however, because, as I repeat, they have, in the past, said they would adhere to international norm and then were caught enriching uranium. And that's dangerous. We don't want the Iranians to have a nuclear weapon.

The positive news, Deb, is, is that the world, at least the people we deal with—the Europeans, for example—are very—were knitted up in terms of the goal, and that is to prevent the Iranians from having a nuclear weapon.

Patsy [Patricia Wilson, Reuters].

Iranian Civilian Nuclear Program/North Korea

Q. Thank you, Mr. President. You just said you were deeply suspicious of Iran's desires. Then my question is, why does the United States support a civilian nuclear program for Iran but not for North Korea?

The President. Yes. The Iranians have expressed a desire to have a civilian nuclear program, and we've said that it is the—it makes sense only so long as the plant is under strong international inspection regimes, and the uranium used to run the powerplant is provided by a country with whom we're comfortable—with which we're comfortable, and the spent fuel is collected. In other words, there will be a strong regime—I talked about this at the National Defense University speech, about how we can enhance the spread of nuclear power but in a peaceful way that will assure countries that spent fuel will not be enriched for bomb-making capacities.

Secondly, the Iranians have been, we hope, straightforward in their willingness to accept this kind of international cooperation.

North Korea is in a different situation. The North Koreans have—didn't tell the truth when it came to their enrichment programs. But what's different about it is the South Koreans have offered power. In other words, the South Koreans have said, "We'll build and share power with you," which seems to me to make good sense so long as the North Koreans give up their nuclear weapons, so long as there's full transparency, so long as there's the ability for the international community to know exactly what's going on in a potential weapons program.

The strategy is the same, by the way, in terms of dealing diplomatically with both countries. As I mentioned, the EU–3 is taking the lead. We have a little different strategy, obviously, different players with North Korea, but nevertheless, it's the same concept, a group of nations are negotiating on behalf of the free world to let, in this case, Kim Chong-il understand that we're united in our desire to—for you to give up any ambitions to develop a nuclear weapon and united in our desire, by the way, to prevent you from proliferating.

Bill Roberts [Bloomberg News]. This will be the last question.

National Economy/Interest Rates

Q. Thank you, Mr. President. Americans have grown accustomed to historically low interest rates over the last few years. How concerned are you and your economic advisers that as interest rates rise now, that could slow the momentum in the U.S. economy?

The President. I think—first of all, as you know, that the Federal Reserve is completely independent from the White House. They make decisions independent of politics, and that's important. Ben used to serve on the Federal Reserve Board, so he's—he has had some insight into the workings of the Federal Reserve. But our job is to deal with fiscal policy, and the Federal Reserve deals with monetary policy.

And as I've said all along, I trust the judgment of Chairman Alan Greenspan. He is—he makes decisions based upon facts, not based upon politics. And I think it's

important for the American people to understand that.

In terms of whether interest rates will—the effect interest rates will have on our economy, I think we're more concerned about energy prices and health care prices. Those are the two areas that we see as having a greater effect on potential economic—on the growth, on the future of economic growth. And that's why the energy bill is an important start, and that's why we've laid out initiatives that we think will help American families deal with the—and small businesses deal with the rising cost of health care.

Listen, thank you all. Great to see you. Mark [Mark Knoller, CBS Radio], good to see you, sir. Thank you.

NOTE: The President's news conference began at 12 noon at the Bush Ranch. In his remarks, he referred to Eileen M. Collins, commander, and James Kelly, pilot, NASA Space Shuttle *Discovery*; President Mahmud Ahmadi-nejad of Iran; Chairman Kim Chong-il of North Korea; and Ben S. Bernanke, Chairman, Council of Economic Advisers.

Remarks on Signing the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users in Montgomery, Illinois

August 10, 2005

Thank you. Please be seated. Thanks. Thanks for the warm welcome. It's such an honor to be here at Caterpillar. I want to thank the men and women who build the machinery here. I want to thank you for your hard work. I want to thank you for your—for putting out a great product.

And I'm here to sign the highway bill because I believe by signing this bill, when it's fully implemented, there's going to be more demand for the machines you make here. And because there's more demand for the machines you make here, there's going to be more jobs created around places like this facility. So thanks for letting us come.

I was telling some of the fellows I met behind the stage that there's a Cat working on the ranch right now. [*Laughter*] And I'm not driving it. [*Laughter*]

I'm honored to be here with Denny Hastert. The best words that I've recently heard were these: Denny Hastert is running for office again. Denny Hastert is a great Speaker of the House of Representatives. He also loves his district, and he loves the people in his district. He was telling me the other day—other day, just a second ago, that he finished in the top 55 in his high school class. [*Laughter*] And the high school was right around the corner. He also mentioned that there was only 55 people in his class. [*Laughter*] He's been here a long time, and he's seen this district grow and change and—but he's always had a heart for the people here. And I'm thrilled his wife, Jean, and his family is with us today as well. Thank you all for coming.

Somebody said the Governor may be here. Governor, if you're here, thanks for being—there he is. Governor Blagojevich, I'm honored you're here. I appreciate you coming. Last time I saw you was at the Lincoln Library opening, and you were kind to be there then, and you're kind to be here today. I'm proud you're here.

With me today is the Secretary of Transportation, Norm Mineta. Norm is doing a fantastic job as our Secretary of Transportation.

We've got key Members from the United States Senate and the United States House

who are here to witness this bill signing. Senator Jim Inhofe from the State of Oklahoma is with us today. He flew down—up from Texas. He and Senator Kit Bond from Missouri were the main leaders in the United States Senate to get this bill done. I'm proud they're here. Thank you for coming.

Congressman Jim Oberstar from Minnesota is with us. Congressman Tom Petri from Wisconsin is with us—two key members on the committee. And you don't know the next one, but we do, and we know him well. He's a man of great accomplishment. He's the chairman of the House Ways and Means. He was very instrumental in getting the highway bill out of the House and out of the conference, and that's Congressman Bill Thomas.

I want to thank the members of the Illinois delegation that are here today: Senator Dick Durbin, Senator Barack Obama, Congressman Jerry Costello, Congressman Bobby Rush, Congressman Ray LaHood, Congresswoman Judy Biggert, Congressman Rahm Emanuel, Congresswoman Melissa Bean. Thank you all for coming.

Somebody said His Honor may be here. There he is. Mr. Mayor, thank you for coming. I have gotten to know Mayor Daley over the last 5 years. I got to know him in the 2000 campaign in a way that wasn't all that pleasant, frankly. [*Laughter*] Let me just say, you want him on your side. [*Laughter*] But since I have become the President, he has been on the side of doing what he thinks right for Chicago. He is a great mayor of a great city, and I'm proud the mayor is here.

Last 4 years, this economy has been through a lot. You know what I'm talking about. We've been through a recession, the stock market declined, corporate scandals. We had an attack on the homeland, and we've had the demands on our ongoing war against the terrorists. To grow the economy and help the American families, we acted. We passed significant tax relief. And the economic stimulus plan we passed is working. Thanks to the efforts of our workers and entrepreneurs, this economy is strong, and it is getting stronger.

Real disposable personal income is up. Homeownership is at an alltime high. Small businesses are flourishing. And last week, we learned that we've added over 200,000 new jobs in the month of July. The national unemployment rate is 5 percent. Since May of 2003, we've added nearly 4 million new jobs. More Americans are working today than ever before in our Nation's history.

But we recognize in Washington, more needs to be done. That's one of the reasons I signed an energy bill. In order to keep this economy growing, we've got to become less dependent on foreign sources of oil.

And that's why I'm proud to be here to sign this transportation bill, because our economy depends on us having the most efficient, reliable transportation system in the world. If we want people working in America, we've got to make sure our highways and roads are modern. We've got to bring up this transportation system into the 21st century. I mean, you can't expect your farmers to be able to get goods to market if we don't have a good road system. You can't expect to get these Caterpillar products all around the United States if we don't have a good road system.

This road system that we have is going to be modernized through the Transportation Equity Act. It provides more than $286 billion over 6 years to upgrade our Nation's network of roads and bridges and mass transit systems. The Transportation Act will finance needed road improvements and will ease traffic congestion in communities all across this country.

Here in Illinois, as the Speaker mentioned, one of the key projects that he's been talking to me about for quite a while is what they call the Prairie Parkway. I thought that might be in Texas, but, no, it's right here in Illinois. [*Laughter*] Good folks understand what that means to the quality of life around here, when you have a highway that will connect Interstate 80

and Interstate 88. The Prairie Parkway is crucial for economic progress for Kane and Kendall counties, which happen to be two of the fastest growing counties in the United States.

In other words, this bill is going to help modernize the highway system and improve quality of life for a lot of people. And these projects will require workers. Highways just don't happen; people have got to show up and do the work to refit a highway or build a bridge. And they need new equipment to do so. So the bill I'm signing is going to help give hundreds of thousands of Americans good paying jobs.

This bill upgrades our transportation infrastructure, and it will help save lives. The bill establishes a safety belt incentive grant program, which will provide incentives for States to adopt laws that increase seat belt usage. Under this bill, the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration will set stability standards to help prevent vehicle rollovers.

In other words, this is more than just a highway bill; it's a safety bill. The American people expect us to provide them with the safest possible transportation system, and this bill helps fulfill that obligation. This law makes our highways and mass transit systems safer and better, and it will help more people find work. And it accomplishes goals in a fiscally responsible way. We are not raising gasoline taxes in order to pay for this bill.

Our Secretary of Transportation, Norm Mineta, will work to ensure that taxpayers get the most from this bill and that projects are delivered on time and on budget.

The United States Congress can be proud of what it has achieved in the Transportation Equity Act, and I'm proud to be right here in Denny Hastert's district to sign it.

Thank you all for coming. May God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:39 a.m. in the Caterpillar-Aurora Facility. In his remarks, he referred to Gov. Rod R. Blagojevich of Illinois; and Mayor Richard M. Daley of Chicago, IL. H.R. 3, approved August 10, was assigned Public Law No. 109–59.

Statement on Signing the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users

August 10, 2005

Today, I have signed into law H.R. 3, the "Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users." The Act is designed to improve the Nation's highway safety, modernize roads, reduce traffic congestion, and create jobs.

Sections 1909, 1141, and 1142 of the Act establish commissions—solely to provide advice on transportation systems, motor vehicle taxes, and infrastructure financing—whose memberships are predominantly or wholly appointed by Members of the Congress. The executive branch shall construe these provisions, including subsections 1909(b), 1141(f), and 1142(g), relating to access by the commissions to agency information, in a manner consistent with the constitutional authority of the President to supervise the unitary executive branch and to withhold information the disclosure of which could impair the deliberative processes of the Executive or the performance of the Executive's constitutional duties. Also, the executive branch shall construe section 1914(a) of the Act, which purports to require execution of that section in consultation with congressional committees, as

calling for, but not mandating, such consultation, as is consistent with the constitutional provisions concerning the separate powers of the Congress to legislate and the President to execute the laws.

Provisions of the Act—including sections 2003(f)(3)(B), 2016(d), 3011(f), and 3016(c), section 5503(f) of title 49, United States Code, as contained in section 4149 of the Act, and section 111(d)(4)(F) of title 49, as contained in section 5601 of the Act—purport to require executive branch officials to submit legislative recommendations to the Congress. The executive branch shall construe such provisions in a manner consistent with the Constitution's commitment to the President of the authority to submit for the consideration of the Congress such measures as the President judges necessary and expedient and to supervise the unitary executive branch.

The executive branch shall construe the described qualifications and lists of nominees under section 4305(b) as recommendations only, consistent with the provisions of the Appointments Clause of the Constitution.

The executive branch shall construe section 5305(g)(3) of the Act to be a statute to which section 552(b)(3)(A) of title 5, United States Code, refers, as the text and structure of section 5305(g) indicate.

The executive branch shall construe section 326(e) of title 23, United States Code, as contained in section 6004 of the bill, which deems a State agency to be a Federal agency for certain purposes in limited circumstances, in a manner consistent with the President's exclusive constitutional authority to faithfully execute the laws and supervise the unitary executive branch, and with proper regard for the role of the States in our Federal system.

The executive branch shall implement section 39 of title 18, United States Code, as contained in section 4143 of the Act, and section 5121 of title 49, as contained in section 7018 of the Act, which relate to warrantless searches and seizures of vehicles, drivers, cargo, property, packages, and records, in a manner consistent with the Fourth Amendment to the Constitution.

Section 1603 of the Act refers to legislative reports accompanying prior public laws as if they had binding legal effect. Such reports do not satisfy the constitutional requirements of bicameral approval and presentment to the President needed to give them the force of law.

The executive branch shall construe provisions of the Act that make legislative classifications based on race, ethnicity, or gender in a manner consistent with the requirement of the Due Process Clause of the Fifth Amendment to afford equal protection of the laws.

GEORGE W. BUSH

The White House,
August 10, 2005.

NOTE: H.R. 3, approved August 10, was assigned Public Law No. 109–59.

The President's News Conference in Crawford, Texas
August 11, 2005

The President. Thank you all for coming. I'm pleased to welcome Secretary Rumsfeld and members of his team back to Crawford, and I'm pleased to welcome Secretary Rice and her team. We just had a meeting with the—the Vice President and I had a meeting with the defense team and earlier this morning with Condi Rice and Don Rumsfeld. We'll have a joint

luncheon, and then we'll visit with the Secretary of State's folks.

We discussed recent developments in Iraq, including the political progress that is taking place in that country. Despite the acts of violence by the enemies of freedom, Iraq's elected leaders are now finishing work on a democratic constitution. And later this year, that constitution will be put before the Iraqi people for their approval.

The establishment of a democratic constitution is a critical step on the path to Iraqi self-reliance. Iraqis are taking control of their country. They're building a free nation that can govern itself, sustain itself, and defend itself.

And we're helping them succeed. We have a strategy to help them succeed. On the one hand, we're hunting down the terrorists, and we're training the Iraqi security forces so Iraqis can defend themselves. Our approach can be summed up this way: As Iraqis stand up, we will stand down. And when that mission of defeating the terrorists in Iraq is complete, our troops will come home to a proud and grateful nation. The mission in Iraq is tough, because the enemy understands the stakes. A free Iraq in the heart of the Middle East will deliver a serious blow to their hateful ideology.

The second part of our strategy is to help freedom prevail in Iraq. The recent violence in Iraq is a grim reminder of the brutal enemies we face in the war on terror. And we are a nation at war. The war arrived on our shores on September the 11th, 2001. And since that day, the terrorists have continued to kill. They have killed in Madrid and Istanbul and Jakarta and Casablanca and Riyadh and Bali and London and elsewhere, and they are determined to do more harm. And they kill indiscriminately. In other words, they don't care who they kill.

And they kill because they're trying to shake our will. They're trying to drive free nations out of parts of the world, so they can topple governments across the Middle East and establish Taliban-like regimes in the Middle East and turn that region into a launching pad for attacks against free people. And they will fail.

After September the 11th, I made a commitment to the American people that this Nation will not wait to be attacked again, and we're going to stay on the offense. And we're fighting the enemy in Iraq and Afghanistan and elsewhere so we do not have to face them here at home.

We're also fighting the murderous ideology, the hateful ideology of the terrorists, and we're doing so by spreading freedom. See, our ideology is hopeful and optimistic and uplifting. I've got great optimism about the spread of freedom because I believe deep in everybody's soul is the desire to be free, and I know that history has shown that peaceful societies are those that are free, that democratic neighbors don't war, that democracies promote peace.

In these times of war, a heavy burden falls on the men and women of our Armed Forces and their families. This morning, we discussed the steps we're taking to deal with the increased demand on our forces. For example, we've been working to rebalance our forces, moving about 80,000 people out of skills that are in low demand into the skills that are high demand, so we do not have to call upon the same forces repeatedly.

We've also taken steps to improve the call-up process for our Guard and for our reserves. We've provided them with earlier notifications. We've given them greater certainty about the length of their tours. We minimized the number of extensions and repeat mobilizations.

We're working hard to ensure our troops and their families are treated with the dignity they deserve and the respect they've earned. In the war on terror, our troops are serving with courage and commitment, and their courage is inspiring others. All of our services met or exceeded their active duty recruitment goals in July. The Army,

which was below its monthly recruiting targets earlier this year, exceeded its July active duty recruitment goal by nearly 10 percent, though it's still behind for the year. The Navy, Air Force, and Marines are on track to meet or exceed their active duty recruiting goals for 2005. And the troops closest to the fight continue to reenlist in impressive numbers. Army, Navy, Air Force, and Marines are all on track to meet or exceed their reenlistment goals for the year. Americans can have pride and confidence in our All-Volunteer Force.

I appreciate so very much the Secretaries and their teams who've joined me today. I want to thank the Vice President for being here. We've had fruitful discussions so far, and we'll continue to have fruitful discussions throughout the day.

With that, I'll be glad to answer some of your questions. Deb [Deb Riechmann, Associated Press].

Iran

Q. Mr. President, on Iran again, has the U.S. intelligence sorted out what role the new Iranian President might have played in the '79 Embassy takeover? And will he be given a visa to attend the U.N. meetings in New York early next month? And wouldn't denying him a visa damage the EU–3 negotiations on their nuclear program and inflame the anti-American sentiment that Karen Hughes—is the very thing that Karen Hughes is trying to abate?

The President. That's a really long question. Whew. Let me start off by saying that we're still investigating allegations and/or this guy's potential involvement in the hostage crisis. We're in agreement with—we have an agreement with the United Nations to allow people to come to meet, and I suspect he will be here to meet—at the United Nations.

On Iran, I can't remember the first four questions you asked on the question, but——

Q. Well, those are the first two and then—[*laughter*]——

The President. No disrespect, by the way.

Let me talk about Iran. As you know, the IAEA today issued a report that expressed serious concerns about Iranian decisions, and that's a positive first step. You know, our strategy is to work with the EU–3, France and Great Britain and Germany, so that the Iranians hear a common voice speaking to them about their nuclear weapons ambitions. And I appreciate the IAEA's positive first step. As you know, there will be a report back after a period of time, and we look forward to working—hearing what that report says.

But the point is that the world is coalescing around the notion that the Iranians should not have the means and the wherewithal to be able to develop a nuclear weapon.

Steve [Steve Holland, Reuters].

Iraq

Q. Thank you, sir. You're increasing U.S. troop strength in Iraq for the upcoming elections. What happens—is it possible those troops will be asked to stay on longer if needed to help improve security? And if I may, what happens if Iraq misses the deadline for drafting the new constitution?

The President. Right. As to the constitution, one of the meetings we had this morning was with Zal, our Ambassador in Baghdad. And he gave us a briefing as to the progress on the constitution. We have made it clear that we believe that constitution can be and should be agreed upon by August 15th. And so I'm operating on the assumption that it will be agreed upon by August the 15th. And Zal said that, you know, obviously there are some difficult issues—federalism being one, role of religion. Hopefully the drafters of the constitution understand our strong belief that women ought to be treated equally in the Iraqi society. But those are issues that still are out there. Although—and he did say that there seems to be a spirit of cooperation and a deep desire for people to work closely together.

As for the troops, no decision has been made yet on increasing troops or decreasing troops. I know there's a lot of speculation and rumors about that. We did, as you might recall, increase troops for the Iraqi election and for the Afghanistan elections. It seemed to have helped create security, and I know the Secretary of Defense is analyzing that possibility.

I also know there's a lot of folks here in the United States that are, you know, wondering about troop withdrawals. They're concerned about the violence and the death. They hear the stories about a loved one being lost to combat. And, you know, I grieve for every death. It breaks my heart to think about a family weeping over the loss of a loved one. I understand the anguish that some feel about the death that takes place.

I also have heard the voices of those saying, "Pull out now," and I've thought about their cry and their sincere desire to reduce the loss of life by pulling our troops out. I just strongly disagree. Pulling the troops out would send a terrible signal to the enemy. Immediate withdrawal would say to the Zarqawis of the world and the terrorists of the world and the bombers who take innocent life around the world, you know, the United States is weak, and all we've got to do is intimidate, and they'll leave.

Pulling troops out prematurely will betray the Iraqis. Our mission in Iraq, as I said earlier, is to fight the terrorists, is to train the Iraqis. And we're making progress training the Iraqis. Oh, I know it's hard for some Americans to see that progress, but we are making progress. More and more Iraqi units are becoming more and more capable of fighting off the terrorists. And remember, and that's a country where 8.5 million Iraqis went to the polls. They've said, "We want to be free," and our mission is to help them have a military that's capable of defeating those who would like to dash their ambitions to be free.

Withdrawing before the mission is complete would send a signal to those who wonder about the United States' commitment to spreading freedom. You see, I believe and know that we're at war, and we're at war against a hateful ideology. And the way to defeat that ideology in the long term is to spread a hopeful ideology, one that says to young girls, "You can succeed in your society, and you should have a chance to do so," one that says to moms and dads, "You can raise your child in a peaceful world without intimidation," and one that says to people from all walks of life, "You have a right to express yourself in the public square."

It's the spread of liberty that is laying the foundation of peace, and it's very important for our citizens, no matter what side of the political aisle you're on, to understand that the mission is a vital mission, and it's one that will be—that we obviously couldn't complete if we didn't fulfill our goals, which was to help the Iraqis.

Yes, Steve.

Q. Just to make clear, you're referring to Mrs. Sheehan here, I think?

The President. I'm referring to any grieving mother or father, no matter what their political views may be. Part of my duty as the President is to meet with those who've lost a loved one. And so, you know, listen, I sympathize with Mrs. Sheehan. She feels strongly about her—about her position. And I am—she has every right in the world to say what she believes. This is America. She has a right to her position. And I've thought long and hard about her position. I've heard her position from others, which is, "Get out of Iraq now." And it would be a mistake for the security of this country and the ability to lay the foundations for peace in the long run, if we were to do so.

But no, Steve, I've met with a lot of families, and I have done my best to bring comfort to the families and honor to the loved one, and get different opinions when you meet with moms and dads and sons

and daughters and wives and husbands of those who have fallen. One opinion I've come away with universally is that, you know, we should do everything we can to honor the fallen. And one way to honor the fallen is to lay the foundation for peace.

Hutch [Ron Hutcheson, Knight Ridder].

Speculation on Troop Withdrawals

Q. Mr. President, these rumors about a troop drawdown really took flight when some of your military people starting talking about drawing down in spring. What was that about? Are they out of line?

The President. I think they were rumors. I think they're speculation. One of the things that we did announce was a joint Iraqi-U.S. commission to look at the security situation in Iraq. Clearly—my position has been clear, and the position—therefore, the position of this Government is clear, that as Iraqis stand up, we'll stand down. And that means that there's a—obviously, the conditions on the ground depend upon our capacity to bring troops home, and the main condition, as to whether or not the Iraqis have got the capability of taking the fight to the enemy.

And so I suspect what you were hearing was speculation based upon progress that some are seeing in Iraq as to whether or not the Iraqis will be able to take the fight to the enemy. In other words, you've got people—obviously, it's important to plan. It's important to think down the road. And you've got people saying, "Well, if the Iraqis are capable, if more and more units are capable of taking the fight to the enemy, it would then provide an opportunity to replace coalition troops with those Iraqis." I think that's what you're seeing. I think it's kind of what we call speculation. And the decision finally will be made by me upon the recommendation of General Casey, through Secretary Rumsfeld, to me.

Q. Does that speculation—grounded in fact, to you, given the way things have gone just recently?

The President. Well, the—I am pleased with the progress being made when it comes to training Iraqi units. One of the things I announced at Fort Bragg was our strategy to embed our troops within Iraqi units so—to better facilitate the training of those Iraqi units. And this morning, General Casey reported to me and Secretary Rumsfeld and the folks standing right back here—reported to us that more and more units are becoming more and more capable and that the embedding process is working.

Now, there's not that many that can stand alone yet, but there are a lot more that are—have gone from raw—you know, that raw-recruit stage to plenty capable. In some cases, some units need no United States or coalition force help. In some cases, they need minimal help. But the point is, is that there is a matrix, and we're following that matrix as more and more troops become capable and competent. And so my answer to you is that we are making progress.

And I've said all along, we'd like to get our troops home as soon as possible, but "soon as possible" is conditions-based. And so we're monitoring progress. The important thing for the American people to know is we are making progress. There's a political track on which we're making progress and the security track on which we're making progress. And I know it's tough, and I know it's hard work. But America has done hard work before, and as a result of the hard work we have done before, we have laid the foundation for peace for future generations.

And I remind people, when they think about the conflict we're in, to think about World War II, when an enemy of ours, Japan, for example, is now a loyal friend and an ally because of the hard work we did, not only during the war but in the post-war reconstruction of Japan.

And the sacrifices that our troops are making, our family are making, are unbelievably noble, and I am incredibly proud

of our military, and I know most of the American people are as well.

Listen, thank you all very much.

NOTE: The President's news conference began at 12:01 p.m. at the Bush Ranch. In his remarks, he referred to President Mahmud Ahmadi-nejad of Iran; U.S. Ambassador to Iraq Zalmay Khalilzad; senior Al Qaida associate Abu Musab Al Zarqawi; Cindy Sheehan, whose son Spc. Casey Sheehan, USA, died in Iraq on April 4, 2004; and Gen. George W. Casey, Jr., USA, commanding general, Multi-National Force—Iraq. A reporter referred to Karen Hughes, Under Secretary of State for Public Diplomacy.

Interview With Israeli Television Channel 1 in Crawford, Texas
August 11, 2005

Yaron Deckel. Mr. President, thank you very much for the first interview granted to Israeli TV and for hosting us in your beautiful ranch in Texas.

The President. Well, welcome. Thanks for coming. It's an honor to have you here, and it's an honor to speak on Israeli TV.

Prime Minister Sharon/Disengagement

Mr. Deckel. I understand why you like this place better than the White House.

We are on the eve of the disengagement, and you have expressed your full support in disengagement, trying to help Prime Minister Sharon in his struggle. And I would like to ask why is it so important to you, Mr. President?

The President. First of all, let me speak about my relationship with Prime Minister Sharon, if you don't mind. We've grown close, and one of the reasons why is I appreciate a person who when he says something, means it. And I hope he appreciates that about me. In other words, I said early on, we're going to join in fighting terror so that Israel could be secure and America secure and other free nations secure.

Secondly—and I have—and he knows I keep my word, and I know he keeps his word. Secondly, what I appreciate is somebody who thinks boldly for peace. And Ariel Sharon came to the White House and said, "We're going to disengage from the Gaza." And I was struck by what a bold decision that was. And the disengagement is, I think, a part of making Israel more secure and peaceful, and I agree with the Prime Minister.

It's important because the United States is a strong ally of Israel and, therefore, if you're a strong ally, you want there to be peace for your ally.

Mr. Deckel. You know, the main concern of Israel is that the disengagement might lead not to more security but, on the contrary, to more violence. Do you understand the concerns?

The President. Oh, absolutely, I understand. And I can understand why people think this decision is one that will create a vacuum into which terrorism will flow. I happen to disagree. I think this will create an opportunity for democracy to emerge, and democracies are peaceful. And therefore, it's very important for the United States, as an active participant in this process, to encourage the formation of security forces that will defeat terror, just like the roadmap calls for—these are Palestinian security forces—and to encourage the Palestinians to develop a peaceful state.

The Negev and Galilee

Mr. Deckel. You had announced that you will support the disengagement by some aid the administration will provide Israel to develop the northern and southern—the Galilee and the Negev.

The President. Right.

Mr. Deckel. Has any decision been made regarding this issue?

The President. Well, first of all, I did say when the Prime Minister was here that the Negev and Galilee present great opportunities for economic development. And we understand that. So I'm going to send teams over to assess the opportunities available for the United States to help Israel, and they'll report back to me. But we have made no focus yet on specific budget items.

Likud Party/Binyamin Netanyahu

Mr. Deckel. Mr. President, are you troubled by the fierce opposition Prime Minister Sharon, your partner, is facing in his own camp, in the Likud Party? According to the polls, he might lose because of the disengagement.

The President. First of all, on democracy there's going to be dissent. And secondly, the Prime Minister has made a very strong, bold decision. And I can understand why people are debating the issue. But I'm confident he's made the right decision. And I can also assure the Israeli people the decision he made has brought the United States and Israel even closer together.

Mr. Deckel. Have you any opinion about Mr. Netanyahu, who stands to succeed him and now is leading the opposition?

The President. Well, I met Bibi Netanyahu. Of course, he's well known in the United States. He's going to make the decision he thinks is necessary for Israel's good, and there's just a disagreement between two friends. But I believe the decision that Prime Minister Sharon has made and is going to follow through on will be good for Israel.

Mr. Deckel. And why are you so sure it's going to lead to more security?

The President. Well, it's an opportunity—first of all, the previous system wasn't working. I mean, there was an intifada; there was death; there was killing. And if you notice, there's been a calm in attacks. One attack is too many, but there's been fewer attacks. And I think in the long run, two states living side by side in peace is the ultimate solution for Israeli's security.

In the meantime, we've got to work to dismantle terrorist organizations, and that's precisely what the roadmap calls for.

President Abbas

Mr. Deckel. How urgent is it that Mr. Abbas take more actions against terrorism? How urgent is it? Because you said that it's not enough, what they have done so far.

The President. Well, I think—and I've told that to the Prime Minister Abbas—or President Abbas. He's a strong—he strongly understands the need to dismantle terrorists. He knows that a democracy can't exist so long as you've got armed groups willing to take law in their own hands, and he's committed to a democratic state. And we've got work to do with him, and that's why we've got a general on the ground there that's helping to try train and coordinate Palestinian forces to fight off the terrorists who would want to stop the process for peace.

Hamas

Mr. Deckel. But would you accept a permanent ceasefire with the Hamas movement, for instance?

The President. Well, you know, Hamas is on the terrorist group.

Mr. Deckel. He made a ceasefire with them.

The President. Well, he's elected by the Palestinians. I am not. On the other hand, I can express my opinions to him, which I have. And I don't believe you can have a peaceful, democratic state with armed groups willing to take the law in their own hands.

Mr. Deckel. As a believer, Mr. President, what do you say to Jewish believers who think that God sent them to settle in the biblical Israel, and they will not obey any decision of elected government?

The President. Well, you know, there are admonitions in the Bible that does talk about the role of government relative to man. And Israel is a democracy, and democracies are able to express the will of the people. The Prime Minister is expressing what he thinks is in the best interests of Israel, and the people will decide, ultimately, whether or not that decision makes sense.

Mr. Deckel. You know, things in the Middle East constantly change. And nobody predicted the U.S. will start dialog with the PLO in the eighties, and then Prime Minister—late Prime Minister Rabin signing an accord with Yasser Arafat. Do you see any similar development with the Hamas in the future?

The President. Here's what I see. I see relations with a peaceful Palestinian state that is run by—that is founded on democratic institutions. That's what I believe can happen and should happen. I mean, in order to ultimately defeat terror, whether it be in Palestinian territories or Iraq or Iran, there must be open, transparent societies based upon rule of law.

Palestinian Control of Gaza

Mr. Deckel. Your timeframe was a Palestinian state in 2005. Would you like to update the timeframe, Mr. President?

The President. I think Israel—the people of Israel must understand that now is an opportunity for the Palestinians to show leadership and self-government in Gaza. And that's why my focus is intensely upon Gaza. We hope that the disengagement goes well. And we understand that once Israel has withdrawn, it's now up to the Palestinians to show the world that they can self-govern in a peaceful way.

Mr. Deckel. You said that once the disengagement is carried out, both sides will help together to the roadmap to meet their obligations. And Prime Minister Sharon vowed that there will be no political progress until the Palestinians will act forcefully against terrorism. Do you share this view with him?

The President. Here's the way I view it. One, I think that the roadmap does call for dismantling terrorist organizations. And secondly, I think—I know that the disengagement from Gaza presents an opportunity for a Palestinian state which is peaceful to begin to grow. In other words, it goes to show that—that there's a chance to show the Israelis and the Palestinians that there's a better life ahead. And in order to do that in Gaza—in Gaza——

Obligations of Middle East Participants

Mr. Deckel. So the burden is upon the Palestinians once the disengagement is over?

The President. I think the burden is on—everybody has got obligations. You know, obviously, the peaceful withdrawal by Israelis from the Gaza is part of the burden. The terrorists—dismantling terrorist organizations is part of the burden. I think the——

Mr. Deckel. Should it be the first—the first step before anything other happens?

The President. Gaza?

Mr. Deckel. The dismantling of the terrorist organizations?

The President. Well, I think that's a part of a process. You see, dismantling a terrorist organization is not only taking arms and isolating terrorists, but it's also showing the Palestinians and the Israelis that a peaceful state can emerge. This is what the opportunity is. And that's why I think that Prime Minister Sharon's decision was so bold.

But we have a—let me finish the obligations. Israelis have obligations. The Palestinians have obligations. The United States has an obligation. That's why Mr. Wolfensohn and our general on the ground is there, to help establish the institutions necessary for a peaceful state to emerge. Arab nations have got obligations now: one, to not incite violence; two, to help isolate and bring to justice terrorists; and three,

to provide funds to help these—the Gaza to become a place of prosperity and peace.

Iran

Mr. Deckel. You mentioned Iran, and I wonder, Mr. President, how imminently is the Iranian threat? There was a release lately of the U.S. intelligence that they won't have any capability in the next 10 years. Is this your latest information, Mr. President?

The President. My latest information is that the Iranians refuse to comply with the demands of the free world, which is: Do not in any way, shape, or form have a program that could yield to a nuclear weapon. And the United States and Israel are united in our objective to make sure that Iran does not have a weapon. And in this particular instance, the EU–3, Britain, France, and Germany, have taken the lead, been helping to send the message, a unified message to the Iranians.

Look, in all these instances we want diplomacy to work. And so we're working feverishly on the diplomatic route. And you know, we'll see if we're successful or not. As you know, I'm——

Mr. Deckel. And if not?

The President. Well, all options are on the table.

Mr. Deckel. Including use of force?

The President. Well, you know, as I say, all options are on the table. The use of force is the last option for any President. You know, we've used force in the recent past to secure our country. It's a difficult—it's difficult for the Commander in Chief to put kids in harm's way. Nevertheless, I have been willing to do so as a last resort in order to secure the country and to provide the opportunity for people to live in free societies.

Iraq

Mr. Deckel. I won't be finishing this interview without asking you about your decision in Iraq. Knowing what you know today, you made the right decision, Mr. President?

The President. Yes. I did. The world is safer without Saddam Hussein in power.

Mr. Deckel. Is it?

The President. Yes. Absolutely. Saddam Hussein—you know, we made the decision on a lot of factors. One factor, of course, is that the world thought he had weapons of mass destruction, not just the United States but the entire world. I went to the United Nations. The United Nations unanimously passed a resolution that said to Saddam Hussein, "Disarm, or face serious consequences." Once again, he defied the world.

But we also made the case that Saddam Hussein had terrorist ties. Abu Nidal was in Iraq. Zarqawi, the man who's inflicting so much murder and chaos on innocent Iraqis, was in Iraq. Saddam Hussein was an enemy of the United States, enemy of a lot of countries. And there's no doubt in my mind that we're safer as a result of him not being in power. And there's no doubt in my mind that a democratic Iraq will be a part of a change in the broader Middle East that will lay the foundations for peace.

You know, a lot of the world says, "Well, unless you are a certain type of person, you can't live in a free society." I strongly disagree with that. I believe that embedded into everybody's soul is the desire to live in freedom. That's what I believe, that there is an Almighty, and the Almighty plants a sense of being free. Therefore, if given a chance, people will live in a free society, and free societies are peaceful societies.

President's Visit to Israel

Mr. Deckel. Any plans to visit in the State of Israel? I know you were there as a Governor of Texas.

The President. I was. [*Laughter*]

Mr. Deckel. What mostly impressed you in the Holy Land?

The President. Well, first of all, I'll never forget waking up in the hotel and seeing this golden shine on the Old City. It was just—and I remember waking up Laura. I said, "Laura, you're not going to believe—you're not going to believe this fantastic sight."

The other thing, of course, that sticks in my mind was the helicopter tour I took of the West Bank, and my guide was Ariel Sharon. It was one of the great ironies of all time. I was a Governor; he was in the Cabinet. And he said, "Would you like to take a helicopter ride?" to me. Governor Cellucci, who went on to be the Ambassador to Canada, and Governor Leavitt, who is now in my Cabinet, and Governor Racicot, the four of us, we said, "Sure," and we got in the chopper, and the tour guide was Ariel Sharon as we choppered all throughout the West Bank.

Mr. Deckel. Will you visit again?

The President. I'd love to visit again sometime.

Mr. Deckel. In your term?

The President. I hope so. And I hope to visit and proclaim success as a result of a bold decision that Prime Minister Ariel Sharon has made, and I think I'll be able to do that.

Mr. Deckel. Mr. President, I do thank you very much for this interview and for your time.

The President. Thanks for coming.

NOTE: The interview was taped at 7:17 a.m. at the Bush Ranch for later broadcast. In his remarks, the President referred to Prime Minister Ariel Sharon of Israel; President Mahmoud Abbas (Abu Mazen) of the Palestinian Authority; James D. Wolfensohn, Quartet Special Envoy for Gaza Disengagement; Lt. Gen. William E. Ward, USA, Senior U.S. Security Coordinator, Department of State; former President Saddam Hussein of Iraq; Palestinian terrorist Abu Nidal, who was found dead in Baghdad, Iraq, on August 19, 2002; and senior Al Qaida associate Abu Musab Al Zarqawi. The transcript was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on August 12. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this interview.

The President's Radio Address
August 13, 2005

Good morning. This week I met in Texas with Secretary of State Rice, Secretary of Defense Rumsfeld, the rest of my senior foreign and defense policy advisers. We discussed recent events in Iraq, including the political progress that is taking place in that country. Despite the acts of violence by the enemies of freedom, Iraq's elected leaders are now finishing work on a democratic constitution. Later this year, that constitution will be put before the Iraqi people for their approval.

The establishment of a democratic constitution is a critical step on the path to Iraqi self-reliance. Iraqis are taking control of their country, building a free nation that can govern itself, sustain itself, and defend itself. And we're helping Iraqis succeed. We're hunting down the terrorists and training the security forces of a free Iraq so Iraqis can defend their own country. Our approach can be summed up this way: As Iraqis stand up, we will stand down. And when that mission of defeating the terrorists in Iraq is complete, our troops will come home to a proud and grateful nation.

The recent violence in Iraq is a grim reminder of the brutal nature of the enemy we face in the war on terror. Our mission

in Iraq is tough because the enemy understands the stakes. The terrorists know that a free Iraq in the heart of the Middle East will be a crippling blow to their hateful ideology. And that is why our work in Iraq is a vital part of the war on terror we're waging around the world.

This war on terror arrived on our shores on September the 11th, 2001. Since that day, the terrorists have continued to kill in Madrid, Istanbul, Jakarta, Casablanca, Riyadh, Bali, Baghdad, London, and elsewhere. The enemy remains determined to do more harm. The terrorists kill indiscriminately but with a clear purpose. They're trying to shake our will. They want to force free nations to retreat so they can topple governments across the Middle East, establish Taliban-like regimes in their place, and turn the Middle East into a launching pad for attacks against free people.

The terrorists will fail. Because we are fighting their murderous ideology with a clear strategy, we're staying on the offensive in Iraq, Afghanistan, and other fronts in the war on terror, fighting terrorists abroad so we do not have to face them here at home. When terrorists spend their days and nights struggling to avoid death or capture, they're less capable of arming and training and plotting new attacks on America.

We're also spreading the hope of freedom across the broader Middle East, because free societies are peaceful societies. By offering a hopeful alternative to the terrorists' ideology of hatred and fear, we are laying the foundations of peace for our children and grandchildren.

In the war on terror, our troops are serving with courage and commitment, and their bravery is inspiring others to join them. All of our services met or exceeded their active duty recruitment goals last month, and the troops closest to the fight continue to reenlist in impressive numbers. The Army, Navy, Air Force, and Marines are all on track to meet or exceed their reenlistment goals for the year. Our troops know the stakes of this war, and Americans can have pride and confidence in our All-Volunteer Forces.

In recent days, we have seen again that the path to victory in the war on terror will include difficult moments. Our Nation grieves the death of every man and woman we lose in combat, and our hearts go out to the loved ones who mourn them. Yet, even in our grief, we can be confident in the future, because the darkness of tyranny is no match for the shining power of freedom.

The terrorists cannot defeat us on the battlefield. The only way they can win is if we lose our nerve. That will not happen on my watch. Withdrawing our troops from Iraq prematurely would betray the Iraqi people and would cause others to question America's commitment to spreading freedom and winning the war on terror. So we will honor the fallen by completing the mission for which they gave their lives, and by doing so, we will ensure that freedom and peace prevail.

Thank you for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 8:50 a.m. on August 12 at the Bush Ranch in Crawford, TX, for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on August 13. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on August 12 but was embargoed for release until the broadcast. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of this address.

Remarks at the Little League Baseball Southwest Regional Championship Game in Waco, Texas
August 13, 2005

Thank you all for the warm welcome. Welcome to Texas. Steve, thank you very much for inviting me. Mayor DuPuy, thank you very much for being such a gracious host for this important regional tournament. It's great to see you. I'm proud to be here, by the way, with the mayor of Crawford, Texas, Mayor David Posten. Mr. Mayor, it's good to see you. Laura and I are really thrilled to be here.

Before I say something about the families here, I do want to thank the Pride of the Blue, the Robinson High School Band, for being here.

I particularly want to say to the coaches of both teams: Thanks for setting such a good example. Thanks for taking time out of your lives to help these young men understand the importance of teamwork and sportsmanship and hard work.

To the families who are here: Thank you very much for supporting your Little Leaguer. Thanks for taking time out of your life to set such a good example for them and show them the love and compassion that is necessary.

And to the players, congratulations to you. You've worked hard to get here. Laura and I and Condi are looking forward to seeing a great game. We wish you all the very best.

Play hard. Play fair. Play to win. God bless you all, and may God continue to bless our great country. Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 7:45 p.m. at Marvin Norcross Stadium. In his remarks, he referred to Steven D. Keener, president and chief executive officer, Little League International; Mayor Virginia DuPuy of Waco, TX; and Mayor David Posten of Crawford, TX.

Statement on the 70th Anniversary of Social Security
August 14, 2005

For 70 years, Social Security has been a vital program and helped millions of America's seniors in retirement. The Social Security system is sound for today's seniors, but there is a hole in the safety net for younger workers. On this 70th anniversary, we renew our commitment to save and strengthen Social Security for our children and grandchildren and keep the promise of Social Security for future generations.

Statement on Iraqi Progress Toward a Draft Constitution
August 15, 2005

Iraqi leaders have announced that they have made substantial progress toward a draft constitution. They have indicated that their deliberations will continue beyond today to refine the text and build an enduring consensus. I applaud the heroic efforts of Iraqi negotiators and appreciate their work to resolve remaining issues through

continued negotiation and dialog. Their efforts are a tribute to democracy and an example that difficult problems can be solved peacefully through debate, negotiation, and compromise. We wish the Iraqi leaders and the Iraqi people well as the negotiators complete the constitutional drafting process.

The President's Radio Address
August 20, 2005

Good morning. In a few weeks, our country will mark the 4-year anniversary of the attacks of September the 11th, 2001. On that day, we learned that vast oceans and friendly neighbors no longer protect us from those who wish to harm our people. And since that day, we have taken the fight to the enemy.

We have combated terrorists on the homefront by disrupting terror cells and their financial support networks. We're fighting the terrorists in Afghanistan, Iraq, and around the world, striking them in foreign lands before they can attack us here at home. And we're spreading the hope of freedom across the broader Middle East. By advancing the cause of liberty in a troubled region, we are bringing security to our own citizens and laying the foundations of peace for our children and grandchildren.

In this war, our Nation depends on the courage of those who wear the uniform. During the coming weeks, I will meet with some of the brave men and women who have been on the frontlines in the war on terror. Next week in Idaho, I will visit with some of the fine citizen soldiers of the Idaho National Guard. I will also see the men and women of the Mountain Home Air Force Base who played a leading role in the air campaign in Afghanistan after the September the 11th attacks. I will thank all of them for their service in the war on terror, and I will thank the families who make their essential work possible.

Our troops know that they're fighting in Iraq, Afghanistan, and elsewhere to protect their fellow Americans from a savage enemy. They know that if we do not confront these evil men abroad, we will have to face them one day in our own cities and streets. And they know that the safety and security of every American is at stake in this war. And they know we will prevail.

Next week in Utah, I will also address the Veterans of Foreign Wars convention and thank the proud veterans who have given today's troops such a noble example of devotion and courage. At the end of the month, I will join our veterans and current service members in San Diego to commemorate the 60th anniversary of V–J Day, the day that ended World War II—the bloodiest conflict in human history.

The veterans of World War II defended America when ruthless foes threatened our freedom and our very way of life. And after winning a great victory, they helped former enemies rebuild and form free and peaceful societies that would become strong allies of America. The World War II generation endured great suffering and sacrifice because they understood that defeating tyranny in Europe and Asia was essential to the security and freedom of America.

Like previous wars we have waged to protect our freedom, the war on terror requires great sacrifice from Americans. By their courage and sacrifices, today's soldiers, sailors, airmen, coastguardsmen, and marines are taking their rightful place among the heroes of history, and the American people are thankful and proud. In this war, many of these brave men and women have given their lives to defend their fellow

citizens and to bring the hope of freedom to millions who have not known it. We owe these fallen heroes our gratitude, and we offer their families our heartfelt condolences and prayers.

Now we must finish the task that our troops have given their lives for and honor their sacrifice by completing their mission. We can be confident in the ultimate triumph of our cause, because we know that freedom is the future of every nation and that the side of freedom is the side of victory.

Thank you for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 8:20 a.m. on August 19 at the Bush Ranch in Crawford, TX, for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on August 20. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on August 19 but was embargoed for release until the broadcast. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of this address.

Remarks to the Veterans of Foreign Wars National Convention in Salt Lake City, Utah
August 22, 2005

Thank you all. Thank you all very much. Thanks for the warm welcome. It's a pleasure to be back here in Salt Lake City, Utah, and I'm proud to again stand with the Veterans of Foreign Wars. Thanks for having me.

I really enjoy coming to these conventions. Members here come from all walks of life, and you do vital work across our country. I know firsthand the spirit of the VFW. I was raised by one of your members, a proud veteran of Post 4344 in Houston, Texas—former President George Bush. Where is that mighty Texas delegation? [*Applause*] Behave yourself. [*Laughter*]

I'm honored to serve as the Commander in Chief of the United States Armed Forces. The men and women who wear the uniform today are protecting our Nation and our way of life. And they are upholding a tradition of honor and bravery and integrity set by America's veterans. All of you defended this country with unselfish courage. You've earned the respect of our citizens. And so, on behalf of a grateful nation, thank you for your service for the cause of freedom and peace.

I appreciate John Furgess. I appreciated working with him for the past year. He's a good, honorable man, and he's represented the VFW with distinction and class. It takes judgment to be the president of an organization. And so when I first saw John this morning, I realized he was a man of good judgment. He said, "You've got to understand, Mr. President, most of the people are really excited to see Laura." [*Laughter*] I'm proud she's traveling with me. I'm proud to call her wife, and a lot of folks in this United States of America are proud to call her First Lady.

And I'm pleased that the Secretary of Veterans Affairs is with us today, Ranger vet, a man who is doing a fine job on behalf of the veterans across the United States, Secretary Jim Nicholson.

When I landed out there at the airport, I was greeted at the base of the stairs by the Governor of this great State, Governor Jon Huntsman. And I appreciate you being here, Governor, and I want to thank your wife, Mary Kaye, for joining as well. There she is. Hi, Mary Kaye. I know the Lieutenant Governor, Gary Herbert, is with us,

and Jeanette. Appreciate you being here, Lieutenant Governor.

I got on Air Force One down there in Waco, and they told me that we had a special guest on our plane. I said, "Well, who is it?" They said, "Well, it's Orrin Hatch." I said, "Fantastic. Glad to give the fellow a ride." [*Laughter*] And the reason why I'm glad to give him a ride—he's a strong ally, and I appreciate a strong ally in Orrin Hatch. He does a great job for Utah, and he does a great job for the United States of America.

I appreciate Congressman Chris Cannon joining us today—thank you for being here, Congressman—and Congressman Jim Matheson. I'm proud you both are here. Thanks for taking time to be here today.

They must have changed the immigration laws here in Utah, because they allowed the Idaho Governor to come across the border. [*Laughter*] I'm proud to be here with my friend Dirk Kempthorne. Thank you for coming, Dirk.

I want to thank the senior vice commander, Jim Mueller, for his hospitality. I'm looking forward to working with him. I want to thank JoAnne Ott, the outgoing National VFW Ladies Auxiliary president. And I want to thank Sandy Germany, who will be the incoming president.

Most of all, thank you all. As veterans of foreign wars, you stepped forward when America needed you. You took an oath to defend the Nation, and you kept that oath, overseas and under fire. You triumphed over brutal enemies, liberated continents, and answered the prayers of millions across the Earth. All of us who have grown up in freedom must never forget your service and your sacrifice.

We also remember the troops who left America's shores but did not live to make the journey home. We think of the families who lost a loved one and who carry a burden of grief that remains for a lifetime. We remember the men and women in uniform whose fate is still undetermined, our prisoners of war and those missing in action. America must never forget them. We will not stop searching until we have accounted for every soldier, sailor, airman, and marine missing in the line of duty.

VFW's mission is to honor the dead by helping the living, and VFW members are making good on that promise every day. Together with your superb Ladies Auxiliary, VFW members have adopted military units, mentored youth groups, assisted in blood drives, and provided countless services to fellow veterans and their families. When you hear the name VFW, you know a certain type of work is being done—honorable, decent, and faithful to the Nation's highest ideals.

In war and in peace, America's veterans set an example of citizenship, and we honor your devotion to duty and to our country. All of America's veterans have placed the Nation's security before their own lives. Your sacrifice creates a debt that America can never really fully repay.

Yet there are certain things the Government can do. My administration remains firmly committed to serving America's veterans. Since I took office, my administration, in working with the United States Congress, has increased spending for veterans by $24 billion, an increase of 53 percent. In my first 4 years as President, we increased spending for veterans more than twice as much as the previous administration did in 8 years.

Health care is a top priority for our veterans, and it's a top priority for my administration. The past 4 years, we've increased the VA's medical care budget by 51 percent, and we're using those resources to make real improvements for our veterans. Over the past 4 years, we've increased total outpatient visits from 44 million to 55 million. We've increased the number of prescriptions filled from 98 million to 116 million. Since January 2002, we've reduced the backlog of disability claims by 20 percent. Claims are now being processed 68 days faster. By the end of this year, we plan

to cut another 15 days on the average turnaround time.

We place a special focus on treating men and women returning from combat and veterans with service disabilities and lower incomes and special needs. In the last 2 years, we've committed more than $1.5 billion to modernizing and expanding VA facilities, so more veterans can get care closer to their homes. My administration is helping the veterans who fought and sacrificed for America get the quality care they deserve.

We're also getting results for veterans beyond the health care system. For more than a century, Federal law prohibited disabled veterans from receiving both their military retired pay and their VA disability compensation. Combat-injured and severely disabled veterans deserve better, and I was honored to be the first President in more than 100 years to sign concurrent receipt legislation.

We've also expanded grants to help homeless veterans in all 50 States and the District of Columbia. No veteran who served in the blazing heat or bitter cold of foreign lands should have to live without shelter in the very country whose freedom they fought for.

You defended our flag in uniform; you continue to defend the flag today. I share the VFW's strong support for a constitutional amendment to protect the American flag. In June, the House of Representatives voted to ban flag desecration, and I urge the United States Senate to pass this important amendment this year.

At this hour, a new generation of Americans is defending our flag and our freedom in the first war of the 21st century. The war came to our shores on the morning of September the 11th, 2001. Since then the terrorists have continued to strike in Bali, in Riyadh, in Istanbul, and Madrid and Baghdad and London and Sharm el-Sheikh and elsewhere. The enemy, the terrorists, are ruthless and brutal. They're fighting on behalf of a hateful ideology that despises everything America stands for.

Our enemies have no regard for human life. They're trying to hijack a great religion to justify a dark vision that rejects freedom and tolerance and dissent. They have a strategy, and part of that strategy is, they're trying to shake our will. They kill the innocent. They kill women and children, knowing that the images of their brutality will horrify civilized peoples. Their goal is to drive nations into retreat so they can topple governments across the Middle East, establish Taliban-like regimes, and turn that region into a launching pad for more attacks against our people. In all their objectives, our enemies are trying to intimidate America and the free world. And in all their objectives, they will fail.

Like the great struggles of the 20th century, the war on terror demands every element of our national power. Yet this is a different kind of war. Our enemies are not organized into battalions or commanded by governments. They hide in shadowy networks and retreat after they strike. After September the 11th, 2001, I made a pledge: America will not be—will not wait to be attacked again. We will go on the offense, and we will defend our freedom.

We have a comprehensive strategy to win this war on terror. It includes three parts: protecting this homeland, taking the fight to the enemy, and advancing freedom. The first part of our strategy is to protect America. We're reforming our intelligence services to stay ahead of our enemies and to rout out terror cells before they strike. We're using our diplomatic and financial tools to cut off the terrorists' financing and to drain them of their support. We've more than tripled funding for homeland security since September the 11th, 2001. We've provided more than $14 billion to train and equip State and local first-responders. Many of our police officers and firefighters and first-responders are veterans, and America is grateful for their dedication to keeping this country safe.

One of the most important tools we have to protect America is called the USA PATRIOT Act. This good law permits our intelligence and law enforcement communities to share information. It gives our law enforcement officers many of the same tools to fight terror that they already use to fight drugs and street crime. The PATRIOT Act is fully consistent with the United States Constitution, and as a result of that act, we're getting results. Our law enforcement intelligence officers have used the PATRIOT Act to help break up terror cells and support networks in California and New York and Ohio and Illinois and Virginia and Florida and other States.

Key provisions of the PATRIOT Act are scheduled to expire at the end of this year. Yet the terrorist threat to our country will not expire at the end of this year. When the House and Senate return from their recess, they need to send me a bill to renew the PATRIOT Act.

All these steps to protect the homeland have made us safer, but we're not yet safe. Terrorists in foreign lands still hope to attack our country. They still hope to kill our citizens. The lesson of September the 11th, 2001, is that we must confront threats before they fully materialize.

Vast oceans and friendly neighbors are not enough to protect us. A policy of retreat and isolation will not bring us safety. The only way to defend our citizens where we live is to go after the terrorists where they live.

So the second part of our strategy is to take the fight to the terrorists abroad before they can attack us here at home. This is the most difficult and dangerous mission in the war on terror. And like generations before them, our soldiers and sailors and airmen and marines have stepped forward to accept the mission. They've damaged the Al Qaida network across the world, and we're going to keep the terrorists on the run. From Afghanistan to Iraq to the Horn of Africa, our men and women in uniform are bringing our enemies to justice and bringing justice to our enemies. Our goal is clear: To secure a more peaceful world for our children and grandchildren, we will accept nothing less than total victory over the terrorists and their hateful ideology.

Iraq is a central front in the war on terror. It is a vital part of our mission. Terrorists like bin Laden and his ally Zarqawi are trying to turn Iraq into what Afghanistan was under the Taliban, a place where women are beaten, religious and ethnic minorities are executed, and terrorists have sanctuary to plot attacks against free people. Terrorists are trying to block the rise of democracy in Iraq, because they know a free Iraq will deal a decisive blow to their strategy to achieve absolute power. The Iraqi people lived for three decades under an absolute dictatorship, and they will not allow a new set of would-be tyrants to take control of their future.

The response—the people of Iraq have made a clear choice for all to see. In spite of threats and assassinations, more than 8 million citizens defied the car bombers and killers and voted in free elections. In spite of violence, the Iraqi people are building a nation that secures freedom for its citizens and contributes to peace and stability in that region.

Now Iraq's leaders are once again defying the terrorists and pessimists by completing work on a democratic constitution. The establishment of a democratic constitution will be a landmark event in the history of Iraq and the history of the Middle East. All of Iraq's main ethnic and religious groups are working together on this vital project. All made the courageous choice to join the political process, and together they will produce a constitution that reflects the values and traditions of the Iraqi people.

Producing a constitution is a difficult process that involves debate and compromise. We know this from our own history. Our Constitutional Convention was home to political rivalries and regional disagreements. The Constitution our Founders

produced has been amended many times over. So Americans understand the challenges facing the framers of Iraq's new constitution. We admire their thoughtful deliberations. We salute their determination to lay the foundation for lasting democracy amid the ruins of a brutal dictatorship.

As Iraqis continue to take control of their own future, we will help them take responsibility for their own security. The enemies of a free Iraq are determined. They are adapting their tactics so they can take more innocent life. American and Iraqi forces are adapting our tactics too. We're on the hunt, side by side with Iraqi troops. We're working to defeat the terrorists together. As we hunt down our common enemies, we will continue to train more Iraqi security forces so they can take on more responsibilities in fighting the terrorists. After all, it's their own country.

Our military strategy is straightforward: As Iraqis stand up, Americans will stand down. And when Iraqi forces can defend their freedom by taking on more and more of the fight to the enemy, our troops will come home with the honor they have earned.

In the long run, victory in the war on terror requires changing the conditions that give rise to violence and extremism. So the third part of our strategy in the war on terror is to spread the hope of freedom across the broader Middle East. Free societies are peaceful societies. By standing with those who stand for their liberty, we will lay the foundation of peace for our children and our grandchildren.

As we work to spread freedom in the Middle East, we have cause for optimism. The rise of liberty in Iraq is part of a wider movement in the region. The tide of freedom ebbs and flows, but it is moving in a clear direction, and freedom's tide is rising in the broader Middle East.

In Afghanistan, men and women have formed a free government after suffering one of the most brutal tyrannies on Earth. America is proud to call Afghanistan an ally in the war on terror. In Lebanon, people took to the streets to demand their sovereignty. They have now gone to the polls and voted in free elections. As freedom takes root in these countries, it is inspiring democratic reformers in places like Egypt and Saudi Arabia. Across the region, a new generation desires to be free, and they will have it. And the world will be more peaceful because of it.

In the heart of the Middle East, a hopeful story is unfolding. After decades of shattered promises and stolen lives, peace is within reach in the Holy Land. The Palestinian people have expressed their desire for sovereignty and peace in free and fair elections. President Abbas has rejected violence and taken steps toward democratic reform. This past week, Prime Minister Sharon and the Israeli people took a courageous and painful step by beginning to remove settlements in Gaza and parts of the northern West Bank. The Israeli disengagement is an historic step that reflects the bold leadership of Prime Minister Sharon.

Both Israelis and Palestinians have elected governments committed to peace and progress, and the way forward is clear. We're working for a return to the roadmap. We're helping the Palestinians to prepare for self-government and to defeat terrorists who attack Israel and terrorists who oppose the establishment of a peaceful Palestinian state. We're providing $50 million in direct assistance to the Palestinians for new housing and infrastructure projects in Gaza. We remain fully committed to defending the security and well-being of our friend and ally Israel, and we demand an end to terrorism and violence in every form, because we know that progress toward peace depends on an end to terror. We'll continue working for the day when the map of the Middle East shows two democratic states, Israel and Palestine, living side by side in peace and security.

As more nations replace tyranny with liberty and replace hatred with hope, America

will be more secure. Our Nation has accepted a mission, and we're moving forward with resolve. Spreading freedom is the work of generations, and no one knows it better than you. Freedom has contended with hateful ideologies before. We defeated fascism; we defeated communism; and we will defeat the hateful ideology of the terrorists who attacked America.

Each of these struggles for freedom required great sacrifice. From the beaches of Normandy to the snows of Korea, courageous Americans gave their lives so others could live in freedom. Since the morning of September the 11th, we have known that the war on terror would require great sacrifice as well. We have lost 1,864 members of our Armed Forces in Operation Iraqi Freedom, and 223 in Operation Enduring Freedom. Each of these men and women left grieving families and loved ones back home. Each of these heroes left a legacy that will allow generations of their fellow Americans to enjoy the blessings of liberty. And each of these Americans has brought the hope of freedom to millions who have not known it. We owe them something. We will finish the task that they gave their lives for. We will honor their sacrifice by staying on the offensive against the terrorists and building strong allies in Afghanistan and Iraq that will help us win and fight—fight and win the war on terror.

As veterans of foreign wars, you know that the rise of liberty is critical to our national security. You understand the power of freedom because you've witnessed it with your own eyes. In a single lifetime, many of you have seen liberty spread from Germany and Japan to Eastern Europe to Latin America to Southeast Asia and Africa and beyond. You've seen that democracies do not fight each other and that liberation leads to peace. With your courage and commitment to freedom, you have lifted lives of millions around the globe, and you made this country and our world more secure.

The generation of men and women who defend our freedom today is taking its rightful place among the heroes of our Nation's history. Once again, America has found patriots who are selfless and tireless and unrelenting in the face of danger. Once again, the American people have been steadfast and determined not to lose our nerve. And once again, we have confidence in our cause, because we know that freedom is the future of every nation and that the side of freedom is the side of victory.

I want to thank you for the example you have set for all who wear our Nation's uniform. I want to thank you for your bravery and your decency. May God bless this Nation's veterans, and may God continue to bless the United States of America.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:17 a.m. at the Salt Palace Convention Center. In his remarks, he referred to John Furgess, commander-in- chief, and James R. Mueller, senior vice commander-in-chief, Veterans of Foreign Wars; Gov. Jon Huntsman, Jr., of Utah and his wife, Mary Kaye Huntsman; Lt. Gov. Gary R. Herbert of Utah and his wife, Jeanette Herbert; Gov. Dirk Kempthorne of Idaho; Usama bin Laden, leader of the Al Qaida terrorist organization; senior Al Qaida associate Abu Musab Al Zarqawi; President Mahmoud Abbas (Abu Mazen) of the Palestinian Authority; and Prime Minister Ariel Sharon of Israel. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of these remarks.

Remarks and an Exchange With Reporters in Donnelly, Idaho
August 23, 2005

The President. I want to thank the Governor for the invitation to come to Idaho. He's been asking me to come here for 5 years, and I finally made it. I'm going to tell the people tomorrow in Boise that I made a mistake not coming here earlier. It's a beautiful State. We're out spending a little time hiking the trails here. This is a spectacular part of the world. I want to thank the people of Idaho for a warm welcome.

I'm looking forward to my speech tomorrow, to thank the Idaho National Guard and those who are on active duty for their selfless dedication to working to make this world a more secure place for those of us who love freedom. I'll remind the people that we're making progress on two fronts—a political front. The Iraqi people are working hard to reach a consensus on their constitution. It's an amazing process to work. First of all, the fact that they're even writing a constitution is vastly different from living under the iron hand of a dictator.

As Americans watch the constitutional process unfold, as we watch people work to achieve compromise and unity, we've got to remember our own history. We had trouble at our own conventions writing a constitution. It took a lot of work and a lot of interest and willingness of people to work for the common good. That's what we're seeing in Iraq, and that's a positive development. The fact that Iraq will have a democratic constitution that honors women's rights, the rights of minorities, is going to be an important change in the broader Middle East.

And on the security front, we'll remain on the hunt. We have an obligation and a duty to protect this country. And one way to do so is to not only firm up the homeland but to stay on the offense against the terrorists, and we'll do so. We'll defeat the terrorists. We'll train Iraqi forces to defeat the terrorists. In the long run, we'll defeat the terrorists through the spread of freedom and democracy.

Anyway, thanks for the invitation. The Idaho National Guard has done good, strong work, and I look forward to thanking them in person. I'll take a couple of questions. AP.

Meeting With Antiwar Protesters

Q. Mr. President, we know you met with Cindy Sheehan a year ago, but she says a lot has changed since then. She has more to say to you, and even some Republicans have said that you should meet with her. Why not do that when you get back to the ranch?

The President. Well, I did meet with Cindy Sheehan. I strongly support her right to protest. There's a lot of people protesting, and there's a lot of points of view about the Iraq war. As you know, in Crawford last weekend, there were people from both sides of the issue, or from all sides of the issue, there to express their opinions.

I sent Deputy Chief of Staff Hagin and National Security Adviser Hadley to meet with Ms. Sheehan early on. She expressed her opinion. I disagree with it. I think immediate withdrawal from Iraq would be a mistake. I think those who advocate immediate withdrawal from not only Iraq but the Middle East would be—are advocating a policy that would weaken the United States. So I appreciate her right to protest. I understand her anguish. I met with a lot of families. She doesn't represent the view of a lot of the families I have met with. And I'll continue to meet with families.

Toby [Tabassum Zakaria, Reuters].

Middle East Peace Process

Q. Hi, how are you doing?

The President. I got you this time.

Q. Mr. President, Israel has withdrawn from the final settlement. What does the Palestinian leader Abbas need to do next? And are there any specific plans for restarting negotiations based on the roadmap?

The President. First of all, I want to congratulate Prime Minister Sharon for having made a very tough decision. As I said in my remarks yesterday in Salt Lake City, the Prime Minister made a courageous decision to withdraw from the Gaza. We have got Jim Wolfensohn, the former head of the World Bank, on the ground, helping President Abbas develop a government that responds to the will of the folks in Gaza. In other words, this is step one in the development of a democracy.

And so to answer your question, what must take place next is the establishment of a working government in Gaza, a government that responds to the people. President Abbas has made a commitment to fight off the violence, because he understands a democracy can't exist with terrorist groups trying to take the law into their own hands.

Along these lines, we've also got General Ward on the ground, helping the Palestinians consolidate their security forces. It turns out that the post-Arafat regime is one of different factions and different security forces that were really in place to kind of maintain his power but not necessarily to protect the overall security of the Palestinian people. It's in the interest to consolidate the security forces so that there is a—the government has got a vehicle and a group of folks by which to help enforce order.

You asked about the roadmap. Of course you want to get back to the roadmap. But I understand that in order for this process to go forward, there must be confidence, confidence that the Palestinian people will have in their own government to perform, confidence with the Israelis that they'll see a peaceful state emerging. And therefore it's very important for the world to stay focused on Gaza and helping Gaza—helping the Gaza economy get going, helping rebuild the settlements for Gaza—for the people of Gaza.

This is a very hopeful period. Again, I applaud Prime Minister Sharon for making a decision that has really changed the dynamics on the ground and has really provided hope for the Palestinian people. My vision, my hope is that one day we'll see two states—two democratic states living side by side in peace.

Who else we got? Bloomberg.

Drafting a Constitution in Iraq/Possible Sunni Insurgency

Q. Mr. President, the Sunni negotiator, yesterday, for the constitution said that if they do pass the constitution tomorrow, that it would cause an insurgency amongst the Sunnis. What would America do if the Sunnis did rise up and have an insurgency?

The President. Well, I think—you know, you're speaking about one voice. There is more than one Sunni involved in the process. Reaching an accord on a constitution, after years of dictatorship, is not easy. And so you're seeing people express their opinion. I don't know if this is a negotiating position by the fellow or not. I'm not on the ground; I didn't hear him.

But I will tell you I spoke with Secretary Rice twice this morning, who has been in touch with our Ambassador on the ground, and she is hopeful that more and more Sunnis will accept the constitution. Again, I repeat to you that we're watching an amazing event unfold, and that is the writing of a constitution which guarantees minority rights, women's rights, freedom to worship, in a part of the world that had only—in a country that had only known dictatorship. And so you're seeing people express their opinions and talking about a political process.

And the way forward in Iraq is for there to be a two-track strategy. One, on the

one hand, there's politics. It wasn't all that long ago, but it seems like a long time ago, I guess, for some, that the Iraqi people expressed their interest in democracy. Eight million people voted. They said, "We want to be free." They went to the polls, said, "Give us a chance to vote, and we will." And they did. In other words, they have made their intentions known that they want to have a free society. And now they're writing a constitution.

The next step after the constitution will be the ratification of the constitution, and then the election of a permanent Government. In other words, democracy is unfolding. And the reason why that's important is, is that we've had a—we had a policy that just said, "Let the dictator stay there, don't worry about it." And as a result of dictatorship and as a result of tyranny, resentment, hopelessness began to develop in that part of the world, which became the—gave the terrorists capacity to recruit. We just cannot tolerate the status quo. We're at war. And so this is a hopeful moment.

And you talk about Sunnis rising up. I mean, the Sunnis have got to make a choice. Do they want to live in a society that's free, or do they want to live in violence? And I suspect most mothers, no matter what their religion may be, will choose a free society so that their children can grow up in a peaceful world.

Anyway, I'm optimistic about what's taking place. I'm also optimistic about the fact that more and more Iraqis are able to take the fight to the enemy. And as I'll remind the good folks of Idaho, our strategy can be summed up this way: As the Iraqis stand up, Americans will stand down. And what that means is, as more and more Iraqis take the fight to the few who want to disrupt the dreams of the many, that the American troops will be able to pull back. We're still going to be training Iraqis. We'll still be working with Iraqis, but more and more Iraqis will be in the fight.

Iraqi Constitution

We've got somebody from FOX here, somebody told me?

Q. Yes, Mr. President, thank you.

The President. There you are, kind of blending in.

Q. Sorry about that. Does the administration's goal—I'll ask you about the Iraqi constitution. You said you're confident that it will honor the rights of women.

The President. Yes.

Q. If it's rooted in Islam, as it seems it will be, is that still—is there still the possibility of honoring the rights of women?

The President. I talked to Condi, and there is not—as I understand it, the way the constitution is written is that women have got rights, inherent rights recognized in the constitution, and that the constitution talks about not "the religion" but "a religion." Twenty-five percent of the assembly is going to be women, which is a—is embedded in the constitution.

Okay. It's been a pleasure.

President's Vacation

Q. What else are you going to do? Are you going to be bike today?

The President. I may bike today. I've been on the phone all morning. I spent a little time with the CIA man this morning, catching up on the events of the world. And as I said, I talked to Condi a couple of times. Tonight I'm going to be dining with the Governor and the delegation from Idaho; spend a little quality time with the First Lady, here in this beautiful part of the world. I may go for a bike ride.

Q. Any fishing?

The President. I don't know yet. I haven't made up my mind yet. I'm kind of hanging loose, as they say. [*Laughter*]

All right, I've got to go. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8:50 a.m. at the Tamarack Resort. In his remarks, he referred to Gov. Dirk Kempthorne of Idaho; Cindy Sheehan, whose son Spc. Casey Sheehan, USA, died in Iraq on April 4, 2004;

Prime Minister Ariel Sharon of Israel; former World Bank President James D. Wolfensohn, Special Envoy for Gaza Disengagement; President Mahmoud Abbas (Abu Mazen) of the Palestinian Authority; Lt. Gen. William E. Ward, USA, Senior U.S. Security Coordinator, Department of State; and U.S. Ambassador to Iraq Zalmay Khalilzad. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Remarks on the War on Terror in Nampa, Idaho
August 24, 2005

Thank you all. Thank you all very much. Thanks for the warm welcome. Glad I finally got here. You got a beautiful State full of really decent people. And Laura and I are thrilled to be here. I'm particularly thrilled to be with the courageous men and women who wear our Nation's uniform. I'm honored to stand with the brave men and women of the Idaho National Guard.

I don't know if you know this or not, but 19 individuals have served both as guardsmen and as President of the United States, and I'm proud to have been one. In times of crisis, our Nation depends on the courage and determination of the Guard. You know that the call to active duty can come at anytime. You stand ready to put your lives on hold and answer that call, and you do so because you love your State and your country. America appreciates your courageous decision to serve, and we appreciate your families and employers who support you in your vital work. Together with your comrades in the Army, Navy, Air Force, and Marine Reserves, you're showing that patriotism and public service are alive and well in Idaho and throughout the United States of America. [*Applause*] Thank you all.

I'm also proud to be here with the Gunfighters of Mountain Home Air Force Base. After our Nation was attacked on September the 11th, 2001, air crews from the 366th Wing flew more than 1,000 combat missions over the skies of Afghanistan. In the war on terror, you're bringing justice to our enemies and honor to the uniform, and our country is grateful to your service.

You can see, coming in here, I'm keeping pretty good company. [*Laughter*] I'm proud to be traveling today with a great wife, wonderful mother, Laura Bush. She said, "When you get in there, keep your speech short." [*Laughter*] I said, "I hadn't been to Idaho yet as President, how can I keep my speech short?" Anyway, I'm listening to her. [*Laughter*]

I'm proud to be here with your Governor, Dirk Kempthorne, and his wife, Patricia. He's a really fine man and a great Governor for Idaho.

Last night we spent the night in Tamarack. I want to thank the good folks of Tamarack for their wonderful hospitality, and thanks for putting up with us and the entourage. [*Laughter*] But we invited the congressional delegation from your great State to join us for dinner, and so we were honored to have the likes of Senator Larry Craig and Suzanne join us for dinner. Senator Mike Crapo, Congressman Butch Otter, and Congressman Mike Simpson and his wife, Kathy, are with us today. Thank you, Mike.

I found it particularly interesting that Larry Craig's mom, Dorothy, is with us, and Butch Otter's mom, Regina, is with us. I guess it's "mothers bring their boys to work day." [*Laughter*]

I want to thank all the members of the statehouse who are here. I appreciate you being here. Thanks for serving your State. I want to thank Mayor Tom Dale of

Nampa. I appreciate you, Mr. Mayor. Mr. Mayor, thanks. He didn't ask for any advice, but I'll give you some anyway—fill the potholes. [*Laughter*] I want to thank Mayor David Bieter of the city of Boise for joining us. Mr. Mayor, thank you. Thanks for your hospitality. Appreciate you being here.

I want to thank Generals Blum, Lafrenz, Sayler for their service to our country. Thanks for greeting me when I came in today. I'm proud of your service. Colonel Charlie Shugg, commander of the 366th, is with us. Colonel, thank you for being here.

But most of all, thank you all for coming. I appreciate you taking time out of your Wednesday morning to say hello.

Our Nation is engaged in a global war on terror that affects the safety and security of every American. In Iraq, Afghanistan, and across the world, we face dangerous enemies who want to harm our people, folks who want to destroy our way of life. And throughout our Nation's history, whenever freedom has been threatened, America has turned to the National Guard. From the War of Independence to today's war on terror, the Guard has defended this country with courage and determination. I'm proud to be the Commander in Chief, and I respect and honor all those who serve in the United States Armed Forces Active Guard and Reserve.

The role of the Guard in our military is unique. You're the only part of the Armed Forces that serves both your State and your country. Here in Idaho, there's 4,300 soldiers and airmen of the Guard who are meeting their State and Federal responsibilities with distinction and with courage. The Idaho Guard has been called up to provide disaster relief eight times in the past decade. You've helped your fellow citizens through fires and floods and snow emergencies. The people of this State take comfort knowing you're on call. And when tragedy strikes, they know they can count on the men and women of the Guard. And as you protect your neighbors from national disasters—natural disasters, you're also helping to protect all Americans from terrorist threats.

A special WMD response team in the Idaho Guard is based in Gowen Field. These good folks are ready to mobilize within hours, in the case of a terrorist attack. You're not only protecting the American homeland, you're also taking the fight to the enemy.

Since September the 11th, 2001, more than 243,000 members of the National Guard have been mobilized for various missions in the war on terror. Idaho now has a higher percentage of its Guard forces mobilized than any other State. At this moment, more than 1,700 soldiers of the Idaho Guard are serving in Iraq. It's the largest Guard mobilization in the history of Idaho. Laura and I are here to thank you for your service and your courage in defending the United States of America.

A time of war is a time of sacrifice, and a heavy burden falls on our military families. They miss you, and they worry about you. By standing behind you, you're standing up for America—the families are standing for America. And America appreciates the service and the sacrifice of the military families.

There are few things in life more difficult than seeing a loved one go off to war. And here in Idaho, a mom named Tammy Pruett—[*applause*]—I think she's here—[*laughter*]—knows that feeling six times over. Tammy has four sons serving in Iraq right now with the Idaho National Guard—Eric, Evan, Greg, and Jeff. Last year, her husband, Leon, and another son, Eren, returned from Iraq, where they helped train Iraqi firefighters in Mosul. Tammy says this—and I want you to hear this—"I know that if something happens to one of the boys, they would leave this world doing what they believe, what they think is right for our country. And I guess you couldn't ask for a better way of life than giving

it for something that you believe in." America lives in freedom because of families like the Pruetts.

Our Nation depends on our Guard families, and we depend on the understanding and support of the employers of our Guard men and women. Your service would not be possible without the employers—without the help of the employers. In offices and schools and factories across Idaho, your colleagues do without your talents so that you can serve our Nation. Businesses are putting patriotism ahead of profit because they know that our prosperity and way of life depend on the freedom you defend. Guard employers are serving this Nation, and they have the gratitude of all Americans.

In this time of callups and alerts and mobilizations and deployments, your employers are standing behind you, and so is your Government. The country owes you something in return for your sacrifice. We've taken a number of steps to improve the callup process so it's more respectful of you and your families. In most cases, we're now giving you at least 30 days' notification before you mobilize so that you and your families have time to make arrangements.

We're working to give you as much certainty as possible about the length of your mobilization, so you can know when you're able to resume civilian life. We're working to minimize the number of extensions and repeat mobilizations. We're working to ensure that you and your families are treated with the dignity you deserve.

We're also taking steps to improve the quality of life. We've expanded health care benefits for Guard and Reserve forces and their families, giving you access to the military's TRICARE system for up to 90 days before you report and 180 days after deactivation.

We're also expanding access to education for those who serve as citizen soldiers. Last year, I was proud to sign legislation providing our Guard and Reserve forces between 40 to 80 percent of the education benefit available to active duty forces, depending on the length of their mobilization in the war on terror.

We've also tripled the amount that can be paid for re-enlisting in the Guard and Reserve. I've asked Congress to authorize a new retention bonus for guardsmen and reservists with critical skills. What I'm telling you is this: We understand that as the Guardsmen and Reservists stand up for America, this administration and the Government of the United States will stand with the Guard and Reserves people.

Your service is needed in these dangerous times. We remain a nation at war. The war reached our shores on September the 11th, 2001, when terrorists murdered nearly 3,000 of our citizens. And since then, they've continued to kill in Madrid, in Istanbul, in Jakarta, Casablanca, Riyadh, Bali, Baghdad, London, Sharm el-Sheikh, and elsewhere. Our enemies murder because they despise our freedom and our way of life. We believe in human rights and the human dignity of every man, woman, and child on this Earth. The terrorists believe that all human life is expendable. They share a hateful ideology that rejects tolerance and crushes all dissent. They envision a world where women are beaten, children are indoctrinated, and all who reject our [their] * ideology of violence and extremism are murdered.

During the last few decades, the terrorists grew to believe that if they hit America hard, as in Lebanon and Somalia, America would retreat and back down. Before September the 11th, Usama bin Laden said that an attack could make America run in less than 24 hours. So now they're trying to break our will with acts of violence. They'll kill women and children, knowing that the images of their brutality will horrify civilized people. Their goal is to force us to retreat. See, they have a strategy. They want us to retreat so they can topple

* White House correction.

governments in the Middle East and turn that region into a safe haven for terrorism.

We saw the terrible harm the terrorists did when they took effective control of the failed state of Afghanistan. After all, it was there that they trained and plotted and planned the attack that killed thousands of our citizens. We will not allow the terrorists to establish new places of refuge in failed states from which they can recruit and train and plan new attacks on our citizens.

On September the 11th, 2001, we saw the future that the terrorists intend for our country and the lengths they're willing to go to achieve their aims. We faced a clear choice. We could hunker down, retreating behind a false sense of security; or we could bring the war to the terrorists, striking them before they could kill more of our people.

I made a decision: America will not wait to be attacked again. Our doctrine is clear: We will confront emerging threats before they fully materialize, and if you harbor a terrorist, you're just as guilty as the terrorist.

We will stay on the offense. We'll complete our work in Afghanistan and Iraq. An immediate withdrawal of our troops in Iraq or the broader Middle East, as some have called for, would only embolden the terrorists and create a staging ground to launch more attacks against America and free nations. So long as I'm the President, we will stay; we will fight; and we will win the war on terror. [*Applause*] Thank you all.

Since September the 11th, we've followed a clear strategy to defeat the terrorists and protect our people. First, we are defending the homeland. We've strengthened our intelligence capabilities. We've trained more than 800,000 first-responders. We have taken critical steps to protect our cities and borders and infrastructure. We have taken the fight to the enemy in our midst. We've disrupted terrorist cells and financing networks in California and Oregon and Illinois and New Jersey and Virginia and other States.

This is a different kind of war. Today's enemies do not mass armies on borders or navies on high seas. They blend in with the civilian population. They emerge to strike, and then they retreat back into the shadows. And that's why there are thousands of our fellow citizens running down every single piece of intelligence we can find, doing everything we can to disrupt folks that might be here in America trying to hurt you.

The second part of our strategy is this—and it's based upon this fact: In an open society like ours—and we will keep it open, and we will keep it free—it is impossible to protect against every threat. That's a fact we have to deal with. In a free society, it is impossible to protect against every possible threat. And so the only way to defend our citizens where we live is to go after the terrorists where they live.

When the terrorists spend their days and nights struggling to avoid death or capture, they are less capable of arming and training and plotting new attacks on America and the rest of the civilized world. So we're after the enemy across the globe. And we're determined, and we're relentless, and we will stay on the hunt until the terrorists have nowhere to run and nowhere to hide.

And the third part of our strategy is this: We're spreading the hope of freedom across the broader Middle East. In the long run, the only way to defeat the terrorists is by offering an alternative to their ideology of hatred and fear. So a key component of our strategy is to spread freedom. History has proven that free nations are peaceful nations, that democracies do not fight their neighbors. And so, by advancing the cause of liberty and freedom in the Middle East, we're bringing hope to millions and security to our own citizens. By bringing freedom and hope to parts of the world that have lived in despair, we're laying the foundation of peace for our children and grandchildren.

We're using all elements of our national power to achieve our objectives: military power, diplomatic power, financial, intelligence, and law enforcement. We're fighting the enemy on many fronts, from the streets of the Western capitals to the mountains of Afghanistan, to the tribal regions of Pakistan, to the islands of Southeast Asia and the Horn of Africa. You see, this new kind of war, the first war of the 21st century, is a war on a global scale. And to protect our people, we've got to prevail in every theater. And that's why it's important for us to call upon allies and friends to join with us, and they are.

One of the most important battlefronts in this war on terror is Iraq. Terrorists have converged on Iraq. See, they're coming into Iraq because they fear the march of freedom. Their most prominent leader is a Jordanian named Zarqawi, who has declared his allegiance with Usama bin Laden. The ranks of these folks are filled with foreign fighters who come from places like Saudi Arabia and Syria and Iran and Egypt and Sudan and Yemen and Libya. They lack popular support so they're targeting innocent Iraqis with car bombs and suicide attacks. They know the only way they can prevail is to break our will and the will of the Iraqi people before democracy takes hold. They are going to fail.

The stakes in Iraq could not be higher. The brutal violence in Iraq today is a clear sign of the terrorists' determination to stop democracy from taking root in the Middle East. They know that the success of a free Iraq, who can be a key ally in the war on terror and a symbol of success for others, will be a crushing blow to their strategy to dominate the region and threaten America and the free world. They know that when their hateful ideology is defeated in Iraq, the Middle East will have a clear example of freedom and prosperity and hope. And the terrorists will begin to lose their sponsors and lose their recruits and lose the sanctuaries they need to plan new attacks.

And so they're fighting these efforts in Iraq with all the brutality they can muster. Yet, despite the violence we see every day, we're achieving our strategic objectives in Iraq. The Iraqi people are determined to build a free nation, and we have a plan to help them succeed. America and Iraqi forces are on the hunt, side by side, to defeat the terrorists. And as we hunt down our common enemies, we will continue to train more Iraqi security forces.

Like free people everywhere, Iraqis desire to defend their own country. That's what they want to do. They want to be in a position to defend their own freedom and their own democracy. And we're helping to achieve that goal. Our approach can be summed up this way: As Iraqis stand up, we will stand down. And when the Iraqi forces can defend their freedom by taking more and more of the fight to the enemy, our troops will come home with the honor they have earned.

At the same time, we're helping the Iraqi people establish a secure democracy. The people of Iraq have made a choice. In spite of the threats and assassinations, 8½ million Iraqis went to the polls in January. By casting their ballots in defiance of the terrorists, they sent a clear and unmistakable message to the world: It doesn't matter where you're born; it doesn't matter what faith you follow; embedded in every soul is the deep desire to live in freedom. I understand freedom is not America's gift to the world; freedom is an Almighty God's gift to each man and woman in this world. The Iraqi people want to live in freedom. Part of securing America for our children and grandchildren is to help them secure their freedom.

Members of the Idaho Guard know the Iraqi people's desire for liberty because they've seen it up close. Specialist Matt Salisbury is with us today. He helped provide security for the election. He described seeing an Iraqi family helping an elderly man to the polls vote that day. Is it all right if I quote you? [*Laughter*] "The pride

radiating from his face was unmistakable," Matt said. "With one act, he recovered his dignity which had been stolen by a tyrant. How can I possibly describe the return of hope and dignity that I saw in these people's eyes? It is worth the sacrifice of leaving families, jobs, and a safe life. I am proud to be a citizen soldier in the 116th Brigade Combat Team serving in Iraq. And I'm proud to stand on my watch."

You see, the Iraqi election that Matt witnessed was more than a momentary victory for the Iraqi people. It was part of a series of defeats for the terrorists. The terrorists have sworn havoc and destruction across—sown havoc and destruction across Iraq. Yet the violence has not stopped the Iraqi people from building a free Iraq. The terrorists failed to stop the transfer of sovereignty. They failed to stop Iraqis from running for office and going to the polls. They have failed to stop a democratic government from taking power in Iraq. The terrorists can kill the innocent, but they cannot stop the political process which ultimately will lead to freedom.

And right now, the Iraqi people are achieving another important victory over the terrorists. Despite threats, intimidation, and the assassination of some of its members, Iraq's Constitutional Drafting Committee has submitted a constitution to Iraq's Transitional National Assembly. Iraqi negotiators are now further debating and revising the text. The establishment of a democratic constitution will be a landmark event in the history of Iraq and the history of the Middle East. It will bring us closer to a day when Iraq is a nation that can govern itself, sustain itself, and defend itself.

It will send a clear signal to the people across the Middle East who are desperate for freedom that the future belongs to freedom. See, producing a constitution is a difficult process. It involves a lot of debate and compromise. We know that from our own history. Our Constitutional Convention was the home to political rivalries and regional disagreements. And the document that our Founders produced in Philadelphia was not the final word. After all, it has been amended many times over the century.

Iraqis are now at the beginning of a long process, and like our Founders, they're grappling with difficult issues, such as the role of the Federal Government. Idaho people have a pretty good view of the role of the Federal Government—[*laughter*]—like, limited. They're arguing about the proper place of religion in the life of their nation. And like our Founders, they will come up with a system that respects the traditions of their country and guarantees the rights of all their citizens.

They understand that in order to have a free democracy, you must have minority rights. The will of the majority, coupled with minority rights and human dignity and rights for women, is important for a free society. They understand that. But what's important is that the Iraqis are resolving these issues through debate and discussion, not at the barrel of a gun. And we admire their thoughtful deliberations. And we salute the determination of the Iraqi leaders to lay the foundation of a lasting democracy amid the ruins of a brutal dictatorship.

The battle lines in Iraq are now clearly drawn for the world to see, and there is no middle ground. Transforming a country that was ruled by an oppressive dictator who sponsored terror into a free nation that is an ally in the war on terror will take more time, more sacrifice, and continued resolve. Terrorists will emerge from Iraq one of two ways—emboldened or defeated. Every nation—every free nation—has a stake in the success of the Iraqi people. If the terrorists were to win in Iraq, the free world would be more vulnerable to attacks on innocent civilians. And that is why, for the sake of our children and our grandchildren, the terrorists will be defeated.

There will be more difficult moments on the path to victory, yet we can have confidence in the future. We have seen freedom conquer evil and secure the peace before. In World War II, free nations came together to fight the ideology of fascism. Freedom prevailed. And today, the enemies of World War II are allies in the cause of peace. In the cold war, freedom defeated the ideology of communism and led to a Europe that is whole, free, and at peace. Now, once again, freedom is confronting the followers of a murderous ideology, and like the hate-filled ideologies that came before it, the darkness of terror will be defeated, and the forces of freedom and moderation will prevail throughout the Muslim world.

In the end, the terrorists will fail because they have nothing positive to offer. The terrorist Zarqawi sums up their appeal this way, "Anyone who stands in the way of our struggle is our enemy and target of the swords." That's the sum of his grim vision. They're brutal but nothing more. They seek to exploit a great religion, but in truth, they are animated by nothing but their own lust for power and their desire for dominion over others. And while they may sow death and destruction for a time, the history of the last half-century is clear: The will to power cannot withstand the will to live in freedom.

We will prevail in this struggle because freedom is the permanent hope of mankind and because we have on our side the greatest force for freedom in the history of the world—the brave men and women of the United States Armed Forces.

Since the founding of our republic, every generation has produced patriots willing to sacrifice for our freedom. Since the morning of September the 11th, we have known that the war on terror required great sacrifice as well. In this war, we have said farewell to some very good men and women, including 491 heroes of the National Guard and Reserves. We mourn the loss of every life. We pray for their loved ones. These brave men and women gave their lives for a cause that is just and necessary for the security of our country, and now we will honor their sacrifice by completing their mission.

The men and women of the Idaho Guard are serving freedom's cause with courage and distinction, and your courage is changing the world. Specialist Charles Glenn of Boise has been on the frontlines in Iraq. He has seen the progress firsthand, and he says, "I know Idaho has made a big difference here. We have been a part of history." The citizen soldiers of Idaho are making history. You're fighting to ensure that our freedom, like the State of Idaho, may endure forever. Americans are grateful for your devotion to duty and your courage under fire. We live in freedom and peace because of your determination to prevail.

I want to thank you for your service. May God bless the people of this great State. May God bless our troops, and may God continue to bless the United States of America.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11 a.m. in the Idaho Center. In his remarks, he referred to Suzanne Craig, wife of Senator Larry Craig; Lt. Gen. H. Steven Blum, USA, chief, National Guard Bureau; Maj. Gen. Lawrence F. Lafrenz, USA, commanding general, Idaho National Guard; Brig. Gen. Gary L. Sayler, USAF, deputy commanding general, Idaho Air National Guard; Col. Charles K. Shugg, USAF, commander, 366th Fighter Wing; Usama bin Laden, leader of the Al Qaida terrorist organization; senior Al Qaida associate Abu Musab Al Zarqawi; and former President Saddam Hussein of Iraq. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of these remarks.

The President's Radio Address
August 27, 2005

Good morning. In recent days, we have witnessed remarkable events in the broader Middle East. People are making the tough choices necessary for a future of security and hope that will make the region and the world more peaceful.

During the past 2 weeks, Prime Minister Sharon and the Israeli people took a courageous and painful step by removing Israeli settlements in Gaza and parts of the northern West Bank. I congratulate the Prime Minister for his bold leadership.

Now that Israel has withdrawn, the way forward is clear. The Palestinians must show the world that they will fight terrorism and govern in a peaceful way. We will continue to help the Palestinians to prepare for self-government and to defeat the terrorists who attack Israel and oppose the establishment of a peaceful Palestinian state.

We remain fully committed to defending the security and well-being of our friend and ally Israel. We demand an end to terrorism and violence in every form because we know that progress depends on ending terror. And we will continue working for the day when the map of the Middle East shows two democratic states, Israel and Palestine, living side by side in peace and security.

As these hopeful events occur in the Holy Land, the people of Iraq are also making the tough choices and compromises necessary for a free and peaceful future. In January, 8½ million Iraqis defied the terrorists and went to the polls to vote. Iraq's main ethnic and religious groups made the courageous choice to join the political process. And together, they have worked toward a democratic constitution that respects the traditions of their country and guarantees the rights of all their citizens.

Like our own Nation's Founders over two centuries ago, the Iraqis are grappling with difficult issues, such as the role of the Federal Government. What is important is that Iraqis are now addressing these issues through debate and discussion, not at the barrel of a gun. The establishment of a democratic constitution in Iraq, just like the establishment of a constitution in Afghanistan last year, will be a landmark event in the history of the broader Middle East. And it will bring us closer to the day when the nation of Iraq can govern itself, sustain itself, and defend itself.

The terrorists are trying to stop the rise of democracy in Iraq because they know a free Iraq will deal a decisive blow to their strategy to dominate the Middle East. But the Iraqi people are determined to build a free future for their nation, and they are uniting against the terrorists.

We saw that unity earlier this month when followers of the terrorist Zarqawi tried to force Shiite Muslims to leave the Iraqi city of Ramadi. Sunni Muslims in that city came to the defense of their Shiite neighbors. As one Sunni leader put it: "We have had enough of Zarqawi's nonsense. We don't accept that a non-Iraqi should try to enforce his control over Iraqis." By choosing to stand with their fellow Iraqis, these Sunnis rejected the terrorists' attempt to divide their nation and incite sectarian violence.

Iraqis are working together to build a free nation that contributes to peace and stability in the region, and we will help them succeed. American and Iraqi forces are on the hunt, side by side to defeat the terrorists. As we hunt down our common enemies, we will continue to train more Iraqi security forces.

Our strategy is straightforward: As Iraqis stand up, Americans will stand down. And when Iraqi forces can defend their freedom

by taking more and more of the fight to the enemy, our troops will come home with the honor they have earned.

Our efforts in Iraq and the broader Middle East will require more time, more sacrifice, and continued resolve. Yet people across the Middle East are choosing a future of freedom and prosperity and hope. And as they take these brave steps, Americans will continue to stand with them because we know that free and democratic nations are peaceful nations. By advancing the cause of liberty in the Middle East, we will bring hope to millions and security to our own citizens. And we will lay the foundation of peace for our children and grandchildren.

Thank you for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 8:20 a.m. on August 26 at the Bush Ranch in Crawford, TX, for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on August 27. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on August 26 but was embargoed for release until the broadcast. In his address, the President referred to Prime Minister Ariel Sharon of Israel; and senior Al Qaida associate Abu Musab Al Zarqawi. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of this address.

Remarks on Hurricane Katrina and the Iraqi Constitution in Crawford, Texas

August 28, 2005

This morning I spoke with FEMA Under Secretary Mike Brown and emergency management teams, not only at the Federal level but at the State level about the—Hurricane Katrina. I've also spoken to Governor Blanco of Louisiana, Governor Barbour of Mississippi, Governor Bush of Florida, and Governor Riley of Alabama. I want to thank all the folks at the Federal level and the State level and the local level who have taken this storm seriously. I appreciate the efforts of the Governors to prepare their citizenry for this upcoming storm.

Yesterday I signed a disaster declaration for the State of Louisiana, and this morning I signed a disaster declaration for the State of Mississippi. These declarations will allow Federal agencies to coordinate all disaster relief efforts with State and local officials. We will do everything in our power to help the people in the communities affected by this storm.

Hurricane Katrina is now designated a category 5 hurricane. We cannot stress enough the danger this hurricane poses to gulf coast communities. I urge all citizens to put their own safety and the safety of their families first by moving to safe ground. Please listen carefully to instructions provided by State and local officials.

On another matter, today Iraqi political leaders completed the process for drafting a permanent constitution. Their example is an inspiration to all who share the universal values of freedom, democracy, and the rule of law. The negotiators and drafters of this document braved the intimidation of terrorists, and they mourn the cowardly assassination of friends and colleagues involved in the process of drafting the constitution.

Their efforts follow the bravery of the Iraqis who voted by the millions to elect a Transitional Government in January. The example of those voters remains a humbling testament to the power of free people to shape and define their own destiny. We honor their courage and sacrifice, and we are determined to see the Iraqis fully secure their democratic gains.

The Iraqi people have once again demonstrated to the world that they are up to the historic challenges before them. The document they have produced contains far-reaching protections for fundamental human freedoms, including religion, assembly, conscience, and expression. It vests sovereignty in the people, to be expressed by secret ballot and regular elections. It declares that all Iraqis are equal before the law without regard to gender, ethnicity, and religion. This is a document of which the Iraqis and the rest of the world can be proud.

The political process now advances to another important stage for a new and free Iraq. In coming months, Iraqis will discuss and debate the draft constitution. On October the 15th, they will vote in a national referendum to decide whether to ratify the constitution and set the foundation for a permanent Iraqi Government. If the referendum succeeds, Iraqis will elect a new Government, to serve under the new constitution, on December the 15th, and that Government will take office before the end of the year.

This course is going to be difficult largely because the terrorists have chosen to wage war against a future of freedom. They are waging war against peace in Iraq. As democracy in Iraq takes root, the enemies of freedom, the terrorists, will become more desperate, more despicable, and more vicious.

Just last week, the terrorists called for the death of anyone, including women and the elderly, who supports the democratic process in Iraq. They have deliberately targeted children receiving candy from soldiers. They have targeted election workers registering Iraqis to vote. They have targeted hospital workers who are caring for the wounded. We can expect such atrocities to increase in the coming months because the enemy knows that its greatest defeat lies in the expression of free people and freely enacted laws and at the ballot box.

We will stand with the Iraqi people. It's in our interest to stand with the Iraqi people. It's in our interest to lay the foundation of peace. We'll help them confront this barbarism, and we will triumph over the terrorists' dark ideology of hatred and fear.

There have been disagreements amongst the Iraqis about this particular constitution. Of course there's disagreements. We're watching a political process unfold, a process that has encouraged debate and compromise, a constitution that was written in a society in which people recognize that—that there had to be give-and-take.

I want our folks to remember, our own Constitution was not unanimously received. Some delegates at the Philadelphia Convention in 1787 refused to sign it, and the draft was vigorously debated in every State, and the outcome was not assured until all the votes were counted.

We recognize that there's a split amongst the Sunnis, for example, in Iraq. And I suspect that when you get down to it, you'll find a Shi'a who disagrees with the constitution and Shi'as who support the constitution and perhaps some Kurds who are concerned about the constitution. In other words, we're watching a political process unfold. Some Sunnis have expressed reservations about various provisions of the constitution, and that's their right as free individuals living in a free society. There are strong beliefs among other Sunnis that this constitution is good for all Iraqis and that it adequately reflects compromises suitable to all groups.

It's important that all Iraqis now actively engage in the constitutional process by debating the merits of this important document and making an informed decision on October the 15th.

On behalf of the American people, I congratulate the people of Iraq on completing the next step in their transition from dictatorship to democracy. And I want to remind the American people, as a democracy unfolds in Iraq, not only will it help make America more secure but it will affect the

broader Middle East. Democracies don't war with their neighbors. Democracies don't become safe haven for terrorists who want to destroy innocent life. We have hard work ahead of us, but we're on the—we're making good progress toward making sure this world of ours is more peaceful for generations to come.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:31 a.m. at the Bush Ranch. In his remarks, he referred to Gov. Kathleen Babineaux Blanco of Louisiana; Gov. Haley Barbour of Mississippi; Gov. Jeb Bush of Florida; and Gov. Bob Riley of Alabama.

Remarks in a Discussion on Medicare in El Mirage, Arizona
August 29, 2005

The President. Thank you all. Please be seated. Thanks for coming. As you can see, it's not going to be just me doing the talking today. We've got some of your fellow citizens here to discuss how we can make sure our senior citizens understand there's a fantastic opportunity available for them in the improved Medicare piece of legislation I signed.

Before we start talking about Medicare, I do want to thank the good folks here at this center, those who live here, those who are helping the folks who live here, for inviting us. It's not easy to have the Presidential entourage come. [*Laughter*] I understand that. But at least my entourage was spiced up by the First Lady's traveling with me today. I appreciate you coming.

Laura and I are proud to be here. We're proud to be with Senator Jon Kyl, who is a fantastic United States Senator. I appreciate you, Senator. We appreciate working with you, and we appreciate getting to know you. He brings Arizona values to Washington, DC. He's a good, down-to-earth fellow who cares a lot about the people here.

And speaking about somebody who does a fine job representing this district, we're honored to be here with Trent Franks—Congressman, thank you—and his wife, Josie. One thing about Trent Franks, you don't have to worry about him telling the truth. He's a good, decent, honorable citizen, and I'm proud to call him friend. I want to thank you for coming, Congressman.

I want to thank the secretary of state, Jan Brewer. Madam Secretary, I appreciate you being here. And the state treasurer, David Petersen—David, thanks for coming. There he is. I don't know if it helps or hurts, but he's from Temple, Texas. [*Laughter*] If it hurts, just forget it. [*Laughter*] That's right around the corner from Crawford.

I'm really honored that the senate president is with us, Ken Bennett. I'm honored you're here. And the speaker is with us. Thank you all for coming. I appreciate you coming. Good to see you again, Ken. Speaker, appreciate you being here.

I want to thank the mayor, Fred Waterman. Mr. Mayor, thanks for coming. There he is. Phil Gordon—Mayor, are you here? Thanks, Mayor, good to see you, sir. Proud you're here. Honored you took time to come. And I want to thank Mayor Elaine Scruggs of Glendale, Arizona. Appreciate your service.

When Laura and I landed, we visited with Ruben and Rita Carroll. They work for the Retired and Senior Volunteer Program, the RSVP program. The reason I bring them up is that the great strength of this country lies in the hearts and souls of our citizens. We got millions of people across our country who volunteer to make

somebody else's life better. And it doesn't matter how old you are or how young you are, there's plenty of opportunity in America to volunteer. And here are two citizens who are setting the way and setting a great example. Thanks for coming—appreciate you setting such a good example for others. Raise your hands so they can see you. There you go.

I know my fellow citizens here in Arizona and across the country are saying our prayers for those affected by the—Hurricane Katrina. Our gulf coast is getting hit and hit hard. I want the folks there on the gulf coast to know that the Federal Government is prepared to help you when the storm passes. I want to thank the Governors of the affected regions for mobilizing assets prior to the arrival of the storm to help citizens avoid this devastating storm.

I urge the citizens there in the region to continue to listen to the local authorities. Don't abandon your shelters until you're given clearance by the local authorities. Take precautions, because this is a dangerous storm. When the storm passes, the Federal Government has got assets and resources that we'll be deploying to help you. In the meantime, America will pray—pray for the health and safety of all our citizens.

I also want to talk about immigration here in this State. I understand the issue well. I was the Governor of a border State. I was the Governor of the State of Texas. I know what it means to have a long border with Mexico. And I understand the solemn obligation of the State government and the Federal Government to enforce our border. I did so when I was Governor, and I'll work with your Governor and Governors along the border to do so as the President of the United States. We have an obligation to enforce the borders.

I understand it's putting a strain on your resources. We know that. I don't know if you know this or not, but hundreds of thousands of people have been detained trying to illegally cross into Arizona. In other words, what I'm telling you is, there's a lot of people working hard to get the job done, but there is more we can do.

I spoke to Mike Chertoff today; he's the head of the Department of Homeland Security. I knew people would want me to discuss this issue, so we got us an airplane on—a telephone on Air Force One, so I called him. I said, "Are you working with the Governor?" He said, "You bet we are." That's the most effective way to do things, is to work with the State and local authorities. There are more resources that will be available. We'll have more folks on the border. There will be more detention space to make sure that those who are stopped trying to illegally enter our country are able to be detained.

It's important for the people of this State to understand, your voices are being heard in Washington, DC. And this Senator and this Congressman are working closely with the administration to make sure we got the resources necessary to do our responsibility, which is enforce this border. And we'll do so—and we'll do so.

I know you're concerned about gasoline prices, and so am I. We finally got us an energy bill, and I want to thank the Members here for helping. You just got to understand that the situation we got ourselves into—dependency on foreign sources of oil—took awhile to get there, and it's going to take awhile to become less dependent. But this energy bill means we've now got a strategy which will encourage diversification away from foreign sources of oil.

And we need to do a lot of things. We need to encourage the development of nuclear power. We need to continue to develop clean coal technology so we can use that abundant resource. We need to have more terminals so we can bring liquified natural gas from around the world into the United States of America.

We will continue to use the crops in the ground to help fuel our automobiles: ethanol and biodiesel. It's going to take awhile to get diversified away from foreign oil, but thanks to Members of Congress,

we got the bill passed after 4 years of debate, and now this country is beginning the diversification process. There's no way—I wish I could just snap my fingers and lower the price of gasoline for you. The markets don't work that way. I'd be snapping if I could do it. [*Laughter*] But we've got a strategy and a plan to help you.

I also want to talk about some hopeful events overseas. First of all, I hope you've watched what has happened in the Holy Land. Prime Minister Sharon made a courageous decision to remove settlements out of Gaza. He said to the world, "I'm going to give the Palestinians a chance to develop a democracy." And the first step toward that democracy is to give—is to remove the settlements out of Gaza. It took political courage to make that decision, and now it's going to take political courage by the Palestinians and Prime Minister Abbas to step up, reject violence, reject terrorism, and build a democracy. And the United States of America stands ready to help.

And there's hopeful developments in Iraq. I know you see violence on your TV screens, and it breaks my heart to see the death of innocent life there. But that's the only thing the terrorists have got going for them. They've got the capacity to shake our conscience because, unlike their ideology, we value every human life. Every person is precious.

I am very optimistic about Iraq because, first of all, I believe deep in everybody's soul is the desire to be free. Freedom is not our country's gift to the world; freedom is an Almighty God's gift to each person in this world.

My hopes for free societies, of course, were bolstered when 8½ million Iraqis went to the polls last January. I know it seems like a long way away, but it wasn't all that long ago when you think about it. They voted. And recently, instead of using guns to decide the fate of the future, Iraqis from all aspects of their society came together and wrote a constitution. This constitution is one that honors women's rights and freedom of religion. Not everybody agreed with it, but now the Iraqi people get to decide. They get to debate. They get to make the decision this fall as to whether or not that constitution will be the constitution that governs their society. And that frightens the terrorists. It scares—they cannot stand the thought of a free society emerging in the broader Middle East. The free society is the exact opposite of their vision of the world. If you want to think about the vision of these terrorists and killers, just think about what life was like for young girls, for example, under the Taliban in Afghanistan. There is no dissent. There's no right. There is no freedom.

We are laying the foundation for peace. It's hard work. But I want to assure you that for your—sake of your grandchildren and your grandchildren's children, that this policy is laying that foundation for peace, because we understand free societies are peaceful societies. We will defeat the terrorists in the short run by staying on the offense. We will defeat them in the long run by spreading freedom around the world.

Not only did I sign an energy bill, I signed a highway bill. That's going to be good for you if you've got a car. [*Laughter*] I also will continue to work on Social Security. I just want to make sure the seniors here understand one thing: Nothing is going to change for you. I hope you don't listen to all the politics coming out of Washington, DC, but you will get your check. You need to worry about whether or not your grandchildren will get their checks.

This system cannot sustain itself the way it is now set up. We got young kids working to pay payroll taxes into the system that's going to be broke in 2040. And that's not fair, and it's not right. My job is to confront problems, not pass them on to future Presidents. And I'm going to continue to confront that Social Security problem.

And we confronted a problem in Medicare. I remember the debate in Washington. They said, "Well, you know, this is an entitlement." Well, no, the entitlement has already been granted. This Federal Government of ours decided to provide health care for our seniors. And therefore, my attitude was, if we're going to provide health care for our seniors, let's provide the best health care available for our seniors.

And one of the things that the current system, prior to our reform, didn't do, it didn't provide prescription drugs. Now, think about that kind of system that was so antiquated and outdated that we would pay money for an ulcer but not money for the prescription drug that would prevent the ulcer from occurring in the first place. That didn't make any sense. We'd provide money for the heart surgery but not one dime of prescription drug coverage for medicines that would prevent the heart surgery from being needed in the first place. I always felt that wasn't a very smart use of taxpayers' money. We'd pay the $28,000 for the ulcer but not the $500 for the medicine.

Secondly, we didn't do any preventative screenings in Medicare. A simple proposition says that if we're going to help have somebody have a healthy life, we ought to have a screening to determine what's wrong so we can solve the problem early, before it's too late.

Thirdly, we felt like seniors ought to have choice. The Government ought to trust people. The Government, as you know, in Medicare, made most of the decisions. This new bill I signed says, "If you're a senior and you like the way things are today, you're in good shape; don't change." But by the way, there's a lot of different options for you. And we're here to talk about what that means to our seniors.

And finally, a part of the Medicare bill that's very important for younger workers and small business is what's called health savings accounts. It's a really interesting option that, if you're running a small business, I urge you to look at to make sure that you've got quality health care available for your employees.

This is a good bill. It started—the bill started kicking in last year when—when we had what's called a "Welcome to Medicare" physical. If you're—if you've just recently signed up for Medicare, you know what I'm talking about. There is a free physical available for everybody who's signing up for Medicare. That's part of the preventative screening. And by the way, prior to that, we had drug discount cards for pharmacies. We saved a lot of seniors a lot of money. About 6 million seniors took advantage of the card.

What we're talking about today is new programs and plans with prescription drugs becoming available for our seniors. This is as much an education exercise as anything else, because I fully understand and our Government fully understands, many seniors don't want to change. They're not interested in change. And therefore, what I'm telling you is, is that, at least listen to what's available. You don't have to change if you don't want to, but at least be open-minded enough to listen. And our panelists today are going to represent different constituencies that will help seniors understand what's available.

By the way, starting October 1st, we have a timetable; we got a calendar. And I've got my man, McClellan, with us. He's a doctor and a Ph.D. See, every Government has got to have a Ph.D., but you notice who—the Ph.D. is not the President. [*Laughter*] That's the way—kind of way it works. But he's going to help—his job is to help make sure seniors understand what's available. Starting October 1st, 2005, Medicare beneficiaries start receiving information about available drug plans. So this is a pre-selling phase. We're traveling the country. I'm doing events like these; Mark is doing a lot of events like these—the Secretary of Health and Human Services.

We're laying the groundwork. We want people to be prepared for what is available.

Secondly, on November 15th, enrollment starts. In other words, you can start signing up. If you're unhappy with the current Medicare plan, here's an opportunity to sign up for a new plan.

Thirdly, January 1st, 2006, prescription drug coverage begins for seniors on Medicare. Think about that. For years, there has been no prescription drug coverage. Starting January 1st of 2006, prescription drug coverage is available, and you have up to May 15th to sign up. So we're—there's going to be ample time for people to take a look to determine whether or not you want to change from your current plan.

There's 780,000 folks on Medicare here in Arizona, and one of the reasons I have come is, hopefully, to get a message out to as many of the 780,000 that I can. And by the way, we're leaving behind a lot of folks who are going to help get out the message here in Arizona as well. If you got any questions, there's an easy way to figure out what I'm talking about here. It's called 1–800–MEDICARE. Pick up the phone; there will be somebody there to answer your question. Isn't that right, Mark? Yes. [*Laughter*] We don't want one of these "check's in the mail" deal, you know—or medicare.gov.

The reason I'm telling you this—and I'm going to say it again before I'm through talking—is that it's really important, for example, for sons and daughters to look into what's available for their mothers and dads, and one way to do it is to get on 1–800–MEDICARE or medicare.gov.

Seniors with no drug coverage and average drug dispenses will see their drug costs cut in half—by one-half. Think about that. This plan will cut your drug bill by half. You need to look at it. You need to look at what's available. And for the first time ever, Medicare has got catastrophic coverage for our seniors. In other words, it says that after you've spent $3,600 a year, the Government will pick up 95 percent of your prescription drug costs. And that's important. That's called peace of mind. It's peace of mind for you. It's peace of mind for your family. One of the interesting parts of this Medicare bill is the catastrophic coverage, and that's important, I thought, for quality of life—and so did Members of the Senate and Members of the House.

Competition works, by the way. You've got one provider, the Federal Government; it doesn't give consumers a lot of choice. But when you provide consumers choice, it's amazing what can happen. People start bidding for your service, so to speak. They want to attract your business. And it's going to work in Medicare too. Did you realize that there's at least one prescription drug plan with premiums below $20 a month in every State now? It's a pretty good deal. And here in Arizona, you've got two plans that cost $20 a month or less and six plans at 20 to 25 dollars a month. In other words, you've got people bidding for your services. That's the whole purpose of the bill, is to say the consumer matters, and our seniors matter a lot. And so you've got a lot of choices.

You can pick any Medicare drug plan that meets your needs, and there will be—as I mentioned, here in Arizona, there's quite a few to choose from. You can keep Medicare as it is. Do you realize about 200,000 citizens here in Arizona use Medicare Advantage Plans, and they're really important plans. It's all part of making sure there is a menu of choice available for our seniors.

I want to talk about low-income seniors right quick. And by the way, if you're getting your coverage from your labor union or your business, this bill will help make sure that your labor union and your business continues to provide health care for you.

I want to talk about low-income seniors, and this is very important for people to understand; that's why it's important for people to go out and explain to—what's

available. One-third of our seniors, the lower-income seniors, will be eligible for drug benefits that include little or no premium. In other words, the premium I was talking about was for people who are more likely able to afford a premium. If you're a poor senior here in Arizona, you will have—end up with little or no premium, low deductibles, and no gaps in coverage. It's a good deal, is what I'm telling you. Let me put it bottom line: You need to look at this plan. On average, Medicare will pay over 95 percent of your costs for prescription drugs.

Now, here's what you have to do—now, this may frighten some seniors—you got to fill out a form. It would frighten me. The good news is, it's a simple application, and it's four pages long. If you believe that—well, it could be 40—big print. If you believe that you're eligible, you need to fill out the form. If you're a mother—I mean, if you're a son or a daughter, you need to get your mom or your dad to fill out the form, I'm telling you.

And that's why we're traveling the country. This is a good deal for our seniors. We have changed Medicare. We have done our duty in Washington, DC. We've upgraded an important program and made it better. And part of the challenge—it's one thing to pass the law; that was challenging enough. But part of the challenge now is to make sure the Federal Government, in concert with State and local governments as well as faith-based groups, grassroots groups, community-based groups, lobbying groups—whatever, all kinds of groups—gets the word out.

I want to thank you all for listening, and expect you as good citizens to help get the word out.

Now, the man in charge, I mentioned, is McClellan, Dr. Mark McClellan. Told you he had a Ph.D., didn't I? He also has an M.D. He has got a big responsibility. He is the Administrator of the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services. Is that right?

Mark B. McClellan. That's exactly right.

The President. He's a Texan, which means he can get the job done and will get the job done.

Explain how you're going to get the job done.

Dr. McClellan. Well, I'm getting a lot of help, and besides that, we've got a chance now, with the new law that was just enacted, to turn Medicare into a program, from one that just pays the bill when people get sick to one that really helps keep them healthy, with drug coverage, with the preventive benefits that you mentioned, Mr. President.

The thing is, speaking now from that medical background that you mentioned, you can do a lot more to keep a patient healthy if they're your partners in the effort, if they understand what they can do, if they take steps in their own life to get better care, to take care of themselves to live a longer and better life. And that's really what the new Medicare program is all about.

When I say we're getting a lot of help, I mean we're turning Medicare into a program that's really about partnership: partnerships with our beneficiaries to make sure their benefits stay up to date; partnerships with health professionals and advocates and experts around the country to make sure that people can get the assistance they need to keep their coverage up to date; partnerships to make people healthier and save money in the process.

The President. To follow up on this low-income deal for seniors, make sure that—I need a second voice up here—people are saying, "Of course, he's telling us that," you know. I'm telling you, it's a good deal.

Dr. McClellan. It is.

The President. The doc's about to tell you.

Dr. McClellan. It is. I've had a chance to talk to a lot of people around the country. I think some of the people up here on the stage with us have had a chance to as well. This coverage for people with

limited income will pay for, in most cases, all of the cost of the premium. So you have a zero premium, no deductible, no gaps in your coverage, and you'll only pay a few dollars for each prescription, at most 3 or 5 dollars and, in a lot of cases, less than that.

And people who may not think of themselves as low-income are actually eligible for this extra help. Basically, if you're struggling with paying for your drugs today because you're living on a fixed income, you've got to worry about paying for the drugs, paying for your rent, paying for your food; you should look into this program. People with incomes—in couples—up to, close to $20,000 are eligible.

And so about one in three seniors, Mr. President, as you said, one in three people with disabilities are eligible for this extra help.

The President. And what happens if somebody is interested and calls the 1–800–MEDICARE line?

Dr. McClellan. Well, we can give them help in filling out that form. We're working closely with the Social Security Administration as well. They sent out letters to everyone who they think may be eligible, based on their Social Security earnings. We're starting to get those applications back in. And as you said, "When in doubt, fill out the application." If you can't fill out all the questions—and it does run 4 pages, but it is big type, and it's only 16 questions altogether—most people only have to answer 12. If there's one you get to that you can't answer, that's okay. Go ahead and send in the part that you can complete, and Social Security will call you back and help you through the other questions.

The President. Great, thanks. Mark's doing a good job. Believe it or not, the Government is actually functioning in an efficient manner on this issue, and I appreciate it. It really is. He's the right man for this job.

Nancy Bryan. What do you do, Nancy?

Nancy Bryan. How are you doing today?

The President. Good, pretty good. [*Laughter*] If you like the heat, I'm doing great. [*Laughter*] It's not exactly cool in Crawford, either. [*Laughter*]

Ms. Bryan. This is a dry heat.

The President. Yes, that's right. [*Laughter*] So what do you do?

Ms. Bryan. I'm a pharmacist here in the valley, and I actually work for Wal-Mart and Sam's Club.

The President. Good.

Ms. Bryan. What I do is I travel all over the valley filling in when people need vacation time or if they have a day off. And it has been great because it gives me a chance to meet seniors from all over the valley.

The President. Right.

Ms. Bryan. In fact, I've been spending a little time up here in Surprise, lately.

The President. That's good. And are you aware of the Medicare—have you been following what we've been talking about?

Ms. Bryan. I definitely have. Wal-Mart actually has put together a program for all of their pharmacies, and they've actually been helping to train us so that we know what to do when the patients do come in to us. We have information that we can hand out to them, that we can get them to the people that can really help them the most.

The President. Part of making sure the seniors know what's available is to call on a lot of folks. The pharmacists around the country have been really doing a great service for our seniors. In other words, if—point-of-sale marketing works. And so you have a senior coming to a counter; you're available, as are your fellow men and women who work in the pharmacies, to explain: "Here's what's available. Take a look at the Medicare plan." Isn't that what you're doing?

Ms. Bryan. Exactly.

The President. Yes. It's a good deal. [*Laughter*] And there's a lot of folks making sure people understand. We fully understand that some people are afraid to

change; we know that. And you don't have to. But I do want to thank the pharmacists, and I want to thank Nancy. I want to thank Wal-Mart. That's called corporate responsibility, is to help people understand what's available.

And so, what are you finding? Are you finding people are nervous about it, interested about it?

Ms. Bryan. I think they're just wanting to know more information. They're a little bit confused. They're a little bit nervous.

The President. Right.

Ms. Bryan. And I think that they're just trying to figure out if it really works for them. Is this the program that's going to really help them?

The President. And there have been seminars at Wal-Mart to make sure the pharmacists——

Ms. Bryan. Well, we actually have a continuing education system for all the pharmacists.

The President. Really? That's great. That's important, and so there will be pharmacists all around Arizona who will have the proper information to explain to Arizona seniors the sign-up dates, what's available, when you can enroll, when you can start getting your prescription drugs. And that's important for people to know.

One of the things—one of the reasons I'm traveling, one of the reasons Mark is traveling, is to thank people for doing their civic duty. So I'm going to start, thanking you.

Ms. Bryan. Well, thank you.

The President. I appreciate you. And another person I'm going to thank—good job——

Ms. Bryan. Thank you.

The President. ——Lieutenant Colonel Don Mowery. Is that right?

Lt. Col. Don R. Mowery. Mr. President.

The President. Yes, thanks for coming.

Lt. Col. Mowery. Thank you.

The President. Of the Salvation Army.

Lt. Col. Mowery. Thank you.

The President. Mowery. The reason I asked Don to come is that throughout this great State and throughout our country is this wonderful fabric of faith-based organizations, all of which exist to serve their fellow—fellow mankind. And the Salvation Army does a great job of doing that by the way.

Lt. Col. Mowery. Thank you. Thank you very much.

The President. Have you ever heard of the Medicare reform plan?

Lt. Col. Mowery. I have, sir.

The President. Other than this meeting?

Lt. Col. Mowery. I have.

The President. Good. How did you learn about it?

[*At this point, Lt. Col. Don R. Mowery, commander, Southwest Division, Salvation Army, made brief remarks.*]

The President. Well, this is an important piece—this is good. First of all, one of the reasons, again, I want to repeat: You've got a lot of churches and temples and faith-based organizations and community groups to help. If you go to a church, do your duty and find out what we're talking about and help the seniors at your church at least understand what's available. That's what the Army is doing. They've got all kinds of programs at the Salvation Army, and they've taken it upon themselves to say, as a part of their outreach to the senior community here in Arizona, "I'm going to learn what this is all about." It is—I appreciate you doing this.

Lt. Col. Mowery. Thank you, Mr. President.

The President. And thanks for setting such a good example.

Lt. Col. Mowery. Thank you.

The President. Now we've got Noreen Goodell. Noreen, thank you for being here.

Noreen Goodell. Well, thank you, Mr. President.

The President. What do you do?

Ms. Goodell. I'm becoming very nervous on stage. [*Laughter*]

The President. You don't look it, so don't let them know. [*Laughter*]

Ms. Goodell. I thought that was, "Don't let them see you sweat."

The President. That's it. [*Laughter*]

Ms. Goodell. I have the privilege and honor of being a registered nurse, and I work for Sun Health Hospice.

The President. Good. Thank you.

Ms. Goodell. Thank you. And I am also the caregiver for my parents, my mother and father, and also my mother-in-law.

The President. Yes. This is an important—everybody is important up here. Noreen represents a constituency group that I'm going to keep calling upon—daughters and sons and daughter-in-laws and sons. We have an obligation, it seems like to me, and you're fulfilling that obligation.

Ms. Goodell. I am, and I'm blessed for it.

The President. There you go. So you heard about the Medicare deal.

Ms. Goodell. I have.

The President. And? How did you hear about it?

Ms. Goodell. Well, being a hospice nurse I deal with a lot of the geriatric population in Sun City and Sun City West, and sometimes they have questions about Medicare benefits, which we try our best to answer. So I thought that it was important that I would try to look into what benefits are available for them and also my parents as well, to make sure that I can provide the best care possible and be their advocate.

The President. Right. And is the schedule clear, the October 15th—the applications go out, the sign-up dates, the—when it begins, is that——

Ms. Goodell. If it wasn't, it will be now. [*Laughter*]

The President. In other words—[*laughter*]—did you try 1–800–MEDICARE? [*Laughter*]

[*Ms. Goodell made further remarks.*]

The President. Listen, Noreen is here; she's a nurse. But if you've got a—but she's also a devoted child. Baby boomers—are you one?

Ms. Goodell. Sandwich generation.

The President. Sandwich generation, all right. I'm a baby boomer. [*Laughter*] All of us have a duty to find out what's available for our parents. We have an obligation as somebody who received the benefit of the love from a parent to do something to make sure our parents have got all options available to them. If you're worried about change, you do not have to change when it comes to Medicare. But if you're someone, for example, who's having to struggle between food and medicine, those days are over with. This Medicare bill relieves you of that burden and that anxiety.

And sons and daughters have got to understand that. And you need to find out what I'm talking about, for the sake of your parents. If your mother or father says, "I don't want to change," you don't have to change. But as a son or a daughter or as a faith-based initiative or as a nurse or as a pharmacist, you have a duty, as far as I'm concerned, to investigate what's available and to lay that out for people to see. And that's what we're here talking about.

And somebody who's going to benefit from this is Margaret Cantrell. That's you. Speak into that microphone, will you?

Margaret Cantrell. True, very true.

The President. She told me she has the same hairdo as my mother. [*Laughter*]

Ms. Cantrell. The same color. It's the same color.

The President. Yes, 3 more years as President and I'll have the same color you got.

Ms. Cantrell. Well, I'll be 82 years old.

The President. When?

Ms. Cantrell. This coming Monday.

The President. Oh, yeah, well, a little birthday celebration for you. You're looking pretty darn good.

Ms. Cantrell. Well, thank you.

The President. How you feeling?

Ms. Cantrell. Fair.

The President. Fair. [*Laughter*]

Ms. Cantrell. And I'm formerly from Salem, Illinois, which is Lisa James's hometown too.

The President. Lisa James. Very good, yes. Nobody knows who she is except for me and Laura. All right, there's a couple others. [*Laughter*]

Ms. Cantrell. And I was a nanny for the James gang for quite awhile.

The President. No wonder you got gray hair. [*Laughter*]

Ms. Cantrell. And I do understand about the new program. I received something from Social Security about 2 weeks ago. I immediately filled it out and sent it back in.

The President. Good move. How about that. By the way, before we get to Medicare, this good lady lives on her Social Security check.

Ms. Cantrell. I certainly do.

The President. And she told me, she said she doesn't want anybody taking it away from her.

Ms. Cantrell. That's true.

The President. Isn't that right? It's not going to happen.

Ms. Cantrell. Oh, good.

The President. That's what you've got to know. The Social Security debate is one that causes people concern because they hear, "They're debating Social Security. They may change it, and I'm not going to get my check." If you're born prior to 1950, you have nothing to worry about.

Ms. Cantrell. I was. [*Laughter*]

The President. Who's writing your lines for you? [*Laughter*]

Ms. Cantrell. I have my daughter—I have just one daughter, Vicki Kaylor, and my son-in-law, Gene Kaylor, and two grandsons, Steve and David. And Vicki and David are with me today.

The President. Fantastic. And so how did you learn about the Medicare plan?

Ms. Cantrell. Well, I received it from Social Security.

The President. Oh, that's right. You already said that.

Ms. Cantrell. I did. [*Laughter*] And I'm on——

The President. Laura said, "I always said, pay attention." [*Laughter*]

Ms. Cantrell. I'm on a first-name basis with my pharmacist, and he's very nice. And he sent me this little brochure so I'd know more about it.

The President. Good. Have you started studying the different plans available yet?

Ms. Cantrell. No, I haven't gotten it yet.

The President. Okay, well, that will be coming your way. And there will be a different—variety of options, and I'm confident that Vicki will help you—you don't need help.

Ms. Cantrell. I filled it. She didn't even see it. I filled it out and sent it back in. [*Laughter*]

The President. Good. Not everybody is just going to fill it out that way. That's what people have got to understand, that people are going to need a little help.

Ms. Cantrell. But it was easy to do.

The President. There you go.

Ms. Cantrell. Really.

The President. She wasn't even prompted. That's awesome.

Ms. Cantrell. Nothing to it.

The President. Did you get the four-page form?

Ms. Cantrell. I did.

The President. Four pages.

Ms. Cantrell. Four pages.

The President. Sixteen questions.

Ms. Cantrell. I didn't count the questions, but——

The President. Big print.

Ms. Cantrell. Right.

The President. Good. That's good. [*Laughter*] Congratulations, you finally got a form to her. [*Laughter*] If in doubt, fill it out. [*Laughter*]

Ms. Cantrell. Right.

The President. Isn't that it?

Ms. Cantrell. That's it.

The President. See, it's really important for those of us in public service to continue to do our duty to folks like Margaret; one, to make sure the Social Security system is available, and it will be. It's just—just your great grandkids need to worry about it. I'm not kidding you.

Ms. Cantrell. I don't have any.

The President. Well—[*laughter*]—you might.

Ms. Cantrell. I might.

The President. Well, somebody else's great grandkids need to worry about it.

Ms. Cantrell. Right.

The President. Shhh. [*Laughter*] You're younger; you better worry about Social Security. If you're an older citizen, you don't have to worry about getting good health care through Medicare anymore. That's what we're here to talk about.

Margaret has shown—says to me that, "Pay attention." That's what she did. They got the form. Do people usually just throw away the paperwork that comes with Social Security? Now, I know you don't—not the check, but I'm talking about the paperwork. [*Laughter*]

Ms. Cantrell. No. No, I don't. I read it.

The President. Okay, good. I hope you don't either, out there. I hope people take a look at that form and pay attention to it because it has got valuable information for you. It means that the quality of your life will improve if you're struggling with prescription drug coverage. It means that this Federal Government has finally, after years, modernized Medicare. And if you want to, you can be in charge. You're in charge of the decisionmaking process; in other words, there's options for you. It's your choice to make. If you don't want to do anything, if you don't want to change at all, you don't have to. But there are a lot more choices available for you. And if you're a low-income senior, you got a fantastic opportunity to get prescription drug benefits.

We don't want you choosing between your utility bills and your food bills and prescription drugs. We want your quality of life to be great, as great as possible. And this Medicare bill will help there.

I want to thank our panelists for being here. Thank you for what you're doing. Thank you for your compassion. Thank you all for coming. May the good Lord continue to bless our great Nation. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:06 a.m. at the Pueblo El Mirage RV Resort and Country Club. In his remarks, he referred to Josephine Franks, wife of Representative Trent Franks; James P. Weiers, speaker, Arizona State House of Representatives; Mayor Fred Waterman of El Mirage, AZ; Mayor Phil Gordon of Phoenix, AZ; Prime Minister Ariel Sharon of Israel; President Mahmoud Abbas (Abu Mazen) of the Palestinian Authority; and Lisa James, Arizona State executive director, Bush-Cheney '04 campaign.

Remarks in a Discussion on Medicare in Rancho Cucamonga, California
August 29, 2005

The President. Thank you, David. Thank you very much. Thank you. Be seated, please. Thank you all for coming. Please be seated. Thank you. So David said we went to this school together; it was called a charm school. [*Laughter*] I never won my seat for Congress. He did. Obviously, it took on him and not on me. [*Laughter*] But I want to thank him for his introduction. I want to thank him for his leadership. David Dreier cares a lot about a lot of issues. One of the issues that he's been

talking to me a lot about is to make sure the Federal Government does its job in enforcing our borders to keep illegal folks out of our country.

And I want to assure you—I don't know if you remember this, but I had a job prior to President; I was the Governor of a border State. And I understand the challenges of enforcing our border. I understand the Federal Government has a role, and State government has a role, and local government has a role. And my pledge to the people of California is that the Federal Government will work closely with the State government and local government to provide assets, manpower, detention space, to do our duty, and that is to make sure this border of ours is secure.

And so I want to thank you on your leadership on that issue, David, and I thank you for working with us on that important issue.

I'm traveling in good company. I'm not talking about Dreier at this point—[*laughter*]—I'm talking about my wife, the First Lady. Thanks for coming, Laura. We're both very excited to come to your great State, and it is a great State. We were met at the airport by Congressman Ken Calvert. I appreciate you being here, Ken. Thanks for coming. Congressman Gary Miller as well is with us, as is Congressman Joe Baca. Thank you all for being here.

I knew Brulte would amount to something one of these days. [*Laughter*] He got something named after him. I'm honored to be here with my friend Jim Brulte at the Brulte Center.

I want to thank Mayor Bill Alexander of Rancho Cucamonga. Bill, thank you for having us here today. I appreciate your hospitality. I want to thank Mayor Paul Leon of Ontario. Paul, thanks for being at the airport today.

I appreciate all the statehouse folks who are here and county folks and the local folks for joining us. Most of all, thank you all for giving me a chance to come by and discuss a really interesting opportunity for our seniors, and that is a reformed Medicare plan.

Before I get to Medicare, I got some other things I want to talk about. First, I want to remind you that the great strength of this country lies in the hearts and souls of our volunteers. We're a nation that is a compassionate, decent nation, where millions of our fellow citizens volunteer on a regular basis to help a neighbor in need. I met one such person today in Joe Graff. Joe is with us. He's been a volunteer with the Ontario Police Department for 15 years. Joe assists the police personnel with traffic control and parking tickets. If you've got one, you might want to call Joe. [*Laughter*]

But my point to you is, if you really do want to help your local community, if you want to help change America one heart at a time, take time out of your life and volunteer. Teach a child to read; tell somebody you love them; feed the hungry; and America will be a better place.

Joe, thanks for coming. I appreciate you being here.

As David said, we're praying for the folks that have been affected by this Hurricane Katrina. We're in constant contact with the local officials down there. The storm is moving through, and we're now able to assess damage or beginning to assess damage. And I want the people to know in the affected areas that the Federal Government and the State government and the local governments will work side by side to do all we can to help get your lives back in order.

This was a terrible storm. It's a storm that hit with a lot of ferocity. It's a storm now that is moving through, and now it's the time for governments to help people get their feet on the ground.

For those of you who prayed for the folks in that area, I want to thank you for your prayers. For those of you who are concerned about whether or not we're prepared to help, don't be. We are. We're in place. We've got equipment in place,

supplies in place. And once the—once we're able to assess the damage, we'll be able to move in and help those good folks in the affected areas.

David also mentioned that we're making progress overseas. And we are making progress overseas. Recently, the Iraqis came together and wrote a constitution. It's not easy to write a constitution. Look at our own history. I was reminded that several of the delegates to our own Constitutional Convention stormed out and wouldn't sign the document.

But now it's up to the Iraqi citizens to make up their minds whether or not they want to live in a constitution. It's a constitution, by the way, that guarantees women's rights. It's a constitution that guarantees religious freedom. It is a good document forged by compromise. It's a document where people came together to say, let's do what's right for a fledgling democracy. It's a document that stands in stark contrast to the days when the people's lives were run by a tyrant.

We're doing everything we can to bring the terrorists to justice. They've only got one weapon. They have no ideology of hope. They have no optimistic vision. The only thing they can do is to murder innocent people and hope that we lose our will. The success in Iraq is vital for success—for peace for our children and grandchildren. And therefore, the United States of America and our coalition will continue to work with the Iraqis to build a democracy, continue to build—to lay the foundation of peace, and continue to help the Iraqis train and prepare so they can defend their own country against the tyrants.

David's right; it was right here in 2000, I talked about Social Security. I want to repeat right quick what I said: "If you're retired and receiving a Social Security check, you have nothing to worry about. You will get your check." You'll get your check. But you need to worry about your children and your grandchildren.

See, there's a lot of baby boomers like me getting ready to retire. Matter of fact, my retirement age is in 2008. Quite convenient. [*Laughter*] And there's a lot of me. There's a lot of baby boomers. And we're living longer, and we've been promised greater benefits than previous generations. And yet there are fewer people paying into the system. Now, if you add all that up, what I'm telling you is, it's going broke for younger workers. If you're receiving your check, you're in good shape. You have not a thing to worry about. Isn't that right?

But you need to worry about the young workers who are putting money into the system that is not going to be around. I'm going to keep working this issue. I believe it is essential that a President confront problems and not pass them on to future Presidents and future Congresses, and I believe it's essential this Congress act.

So in other words, I hadn't changed my mind since I came here to talk about Social Security. The other thing I worked on with Members of Congress was to fulfill our promise to our seniors that they'd have as good a health care system as possible. Medicare is a really important program; except Medicare wasn't modern. When we got to—when I got to Washington, it was a system that was kind of stuck in the past. I'll tell you why. Medicare would pay for heart surgery but not a dime for the drugs that could prevent the heart surgery from being needed in the first place. It would pay $28,000 for ulcer surgery but not $500 for the prescription drugs that could prevent the ulcer from occurring in the first place.

That's not a modern system. That's an antiquated system. And not only that, it was costing the taxpayers more money than necessary. It seems like to me it makes fiscal sense to say, "Let's spend the $500 to prevent the 28,000 from being needed." It's a wise use of your money, it seems like to me. But we weren't doing it that way.

And so I called upon Congress, both Republicans and Democrats, to work together to modernize the Medicare system. And what we're here to talk about is a strengthened Medicare program. And the reason we're having to travel around to do so is because I fully understand a lot of people don't want to change. In other words, people who are on Medicare say, "Look, just leave me alone. I'm not interested." And if that's the way you feel, that's fine. This is voluntary program. But what I want to hear—want you to hear is there are some really good options for you to choose from if you want to. In other words, there's a menu of opportunity now available to you.

If you've just recently signed up for Medicare, you know one of the reforms that we've put in place. It's called "Welcome to Medicare" physical. For the first time in Medicare, the Government is now paying for a physical. Makes sense, doesn't it? Why don't we test you early so we can solve the problems early.

There's preventive medicine involved with Medicare now, and that's important. But the big change is going to come when it comes to prescription drug coverage. Seniors with no drug coverage or average drug expenses will see your drug costs cut in half. In other words, you take a look at this program, you're going to have some big savings when it comes to drugs.

And for the first time ever, we got catastrophic coverage as a part of Medicare. In other words, once you're out of your pocket a certain amount of money, the Government kicks in for a lot of the remainder. You see, this is a quality-of-life bill, but it's also a peace-of-mind bill. In other words, it's a chance to really modernize the system, on the one hand, but it's also to provide security on the other. And that's why there's a catastrophic coverage in there.

If you're a low-income senior, you will virtually pay nothing for your prescription drugs. And that's important for you to know. If you're a low-income senior, the Federal Government will pick up at least 95 percent of your prescription drug coverage. There will be no gaps in your coverage. There will be low deductibles.

And so we're here to try to encourage you, as seniors, to look at the different options for you. You know, for example, we're going—you'll hear from some of your fellow citizens—or our fellow citizens up here, and they're talking about Medicare Advantage Plans. If you're on a Medicare Advantage Plan, these plans will be strengthened under this reform package. If you're getting your health care from your union or your former employer, there's incentives in the bill to provide monies to make sure that your provider still provides you the health care. In other words, it's a comprehensive piece of legislation, and it's a good one. It's a good one.

I know that you wept, like many of us wept, when we heard stories about people having to choose between food or medicine. Those days are gone because of this Medicare legislation. Now, we got us a timetable that people have got to pay attention to. It starts with this: On October the 1st, beneficiaries start receiving information about available drug plans. In other words, the Government is going to start making sure information is available for you all to understand that which is available to you, if you so choose to pick one, a different plan. And that starts October the 1st.

On November the 15th, you can start signing up for a plan that suits your needs. Again, I repeat: If you're happy with what you've got, don't worry about it. Just kind of take the paperwork and file it. [*Laughter*] But if you're interested in different options, look at the information that's being sent and know that starting November 15th, you can enroll, and starting January 1, 2006, for the first time, thanks to this piece of legislation, prescription drug benefits will—prescription drug coverage will begin for our seniors. And you got up until May 15, 2006, to sign up to pay the lowest premiums.

Now, our job is to make sure that a lot of people know what's coming. In other words, our job is to encourage people at the State level and the local level and the Federal level to educate seniors. And that's what we're doing here today.

I put a good man in charge of this program, and that's Dr. Mark McClellan. He's from Texas—[*laughter*]—which means he knows how to get something done. He's got him a Ph.D.——

Audience members. Oooh!

The President. Now, wait a minute. [*Laughter*] If I had said California, he'd have got things done too. [*Laughter*] I'm just telling you, he can get it done. That's why he's sitting where he's sitting. He's a Ph.D. Here you got on stage a C student and a Ph.D., and look who's President. He's also an M.D. But he's also responsible for making sure that information gets out. By the way, if you're interested in information, call 1–800–MEDICARE, or medicare.gov.

Mark, tell them what you've been doing.

Mark B. McClellan. We've been working to make sure that people know about the options that are coming, and there are some really good options for people here in California by the way, where I used to practice medicine before coming into Government, right here in northern California——

The President. See? [*Laughter*]

Dr. McClellan. ——and in southern California as well. We've got a number of plan choices that are going to be available that are a lot less expensive than people thought.

When this bill was first passed, people were talking about the coverage costing around $37 a month. Well, what we know from the plans that are going to be available here in California, the costs are going to average only around $25 a month out here, and there will be plan choices available to seniors and people with a disability for less than $20 a month. And many of them will provide extra coverage.

So this is worth taking a look at. And as you said, Mr. President, it's designed to work with the coverage that you have now. If you're lucky enough to have drug coverage from an employer, you can now get help from Medicare in paying for that employer coverage. If you've got a Medicare Advantage Plan, one of the Medicare health plans that offers some drug coverage now, well, those plans are going to offer more drug coverage next year. So no matter what situation you're in, you can get help with your drug costs from Medicare, and that help is looking especially good right here in California.

The President. One of the things that—if you want to apply for the benefits for low-income seniors, you have to fill out a form. I know that generally frightens people. It frightens me. A four-page form, that sounds like a lot. You'll be pleased to hear it's big print—16 questions on 4 pages. And the Social Security Administration has mailed out those forms.

Dr. McClellan. That's right. They've sent letters out to millions of people who they think are eligible for this coverage, because a lot of people who don't think of themselves as low income, but are struggling with their drug costs, are actually eligible for this. The eligibility goes up to people living on incomes up to close to $20,000 a year for a couple. So that's most people who are trying to get by month to month just on their Social Security check.

The President. So it's really important to look into this program, and it's important to take a look at the forms. And for those of you out there who are trying to help our seniors, it's important for you to understand what I'm talking about. Part of making sure this works and part of making sure that the information is spread throughout our society, is sons and daughters need to pay attention to this program. You need to do your duty as a son or a daughter and get this information to your moms or your dads. That's what you need to do.

You need to make sure that you help investigate what's possible and not miss a really good opportunity.

This is a good deal, and therefore, you need to follow through on it. And part of the process is to fill out this form. And it's not all that hard, but if you get stuck, there's a way to get unstuck on filling out the form.

Dr. McClellan. That's right. Just fill out the questions that you think you can answer. Send it in. Social Security will call you back and help you fill out the rest.

And, Mr. President, this is extra help worth about $4,000 altogether, so it's about $1,000 a page for people filling out this application. It's very comprehensive drug coverage—no premiums, no deductibles, just a few dollars, usually, for the cost of your prescription, all for just a four-page form.

The President. Mark has been on the road with the Secretary of Health and Human Services and others on a grassroots campaign, because we understood when this started coming out that we needed to do a lot of education. Again, I repeat: Some folks simply don't want any change, and I understand that completely. But I urge you to take a look, and you'll find more options available. You see, the more options that are available, the more likely there's going to get—you're going to get what you want. And if you're a low-income senior, you've got to take advantage of the Government program. It is a good deal.

Now, part of making sure that we're able to get the word out is we're rallying grassroots organizations. One such organization is Larry Krutchik's organization.

Larry, thank you for coming. Tell the people what it is.

[*At this point, Larry Krutchik, regional director, Medicare Today, made brief remarks.*]

The President. I appreciate that. Isn't that great? I mean, to me, it's—I appreciate you doing that, and I want you to thank the volunteers who are working on this program on behalf of the seniors who are going to benefit from it.

If you're going to a church and you're interested in the project, why don't you help the elderly in your church understand that which is coming? Why don't you take a little time and find out the programs available and find out—get the forms and help somebody? This is a good deal. I know it may—you're probably saying, "Another politician saying it's a good deal." [*Laughter*] I'm telling you, it is. And it makes sense to pay attention to it.

And we understand we have an obligation to get out and make the information available. It's your choice. The Government is not telling you what to do, but the Government is saying here's some interesting opportunities for you.

And Larry, I want to thank you for being out there and making those opportunities available.

We got another fellow here—Ken Morris. Ken, thanks for coming. What do you do to make a living?

[*Ken Morris, pharmacist, made brief remarks.*]

The President. One of the interesting places where we're able to make this program better known is at the pharmacies. I mean, it makes sense if you're going to pick up a prescription drug and the pharmacist is the point of contact and the pharmacist says, "Hey, look, here's a new thing coming down." And we've got a lot of pharmacists from around the United States who have signed up to help, and I want to thank the pharmacists for doing that.

What do you find when you hear—give us a sense of what you're hearing out there.

Mr. Morris. Well, it's long overdue. The seniors are welcoming this plan with open arms, as are health care professionals such as myself. It's heartbreaking for me to deal with seniors that come in, as you had mentioned, maybe with a heart surgery and to find out that they've now got a list of a

half-dozen medications and they're trying to make a decision on which ones to take because they can't afford to take all of them. So it's tough; it's a long time coming.

The President. But are people beginning to become aware that there's a new Medicare bill that had been passed and some options are now becoming available?

Mr. Morris. Yes, I think so. As we get a little closer, I think, to October, I think the questions will start ramping up. But at this point, people have been getting mailings. We just need to make sure that they understand exactly what the plan is about.

The President. Yes. There's a great opportunity for those of you out there who want to help a senior citizen in your neighborhood, is to help. Get on the Internet, medicare.gov. Look it up. Find out what we're talking about. Make sure what we're talking about is exactly what the Government has got available. I think it is. I think you're going to find out what we're—what Mark and I are telling you is exactly what's going to happen. But it's a fantastic opportunity.

And again, I want to thank the pharmacists. I want to thank the community activists, the grassroots organizers. This, by the way, isn't a Republican deal or a Democrat deal; this is good for America. It doesn't matter what your party is when it comes to Medicare. We just want to make sure, and the Government has an obligation to make sure, you got a modern system that works well so that you can live in dignity. They ought to call this the "You've Retired in Dignity" bill, because it's a good piece of legislation.

And we've got some folks up here who are concerned about their Social Security or Medicare. Joan Gest is with us. Thanks for coming.

Joan Gest. Thank you, Mr. President.

The President. Proud you're here. She's——

Ms. Gest. Very happy to be here.

The President. Her sole source of income is Social Security, by the way. I could tell—she was looking at me when I first walked in the room to meet her. She was wondering whether or not old George W. is going to take away her Social Security check.

Ms. Gest. I sure hope not.

The President. The answer is no. You're going to get your check.

Ms. Gest. Thank you, sir.

The President. You deserve it.

Ms. Gest. And I'm on Medicare, and there's been times that I've had drugs that I refused to take because they were too expensive.

The President. Yes.

Ms. Gest. And I think this plan could help me. And as a volunteer at Kaiser Hospital and as a community representative for downtown Fontana, I'm hoping to pass this word along to some of our organizations in town and some of our service groups and some of our senior citizens homes. And I hope that I'm able to do that.

The President. See, that's great, isn't it? Here she is somebody who was wondering what the program means for her and as well is willing to spread the word. And I hope people who are—thank you for doing that. Thank you for volunteering too.

Ms. Gest. Thank you. I'm a mother of five children.

The President. Five children.

Ms. Gest. Five step-children.

The President. Fantastic.

Ms. Gest. Twenty-seven grandchildren.

The President. Whew.

Ms. Gest. And three great-grandchildren. And I have a son, Mike, out in the audience today that——

The President. Mike listening to you?

Ms. Gest. He better be.

The President. Yes. [*Laughter*] Kind of like my family. [*Laughter*]

Joan, one of the most things—proud things—one of the things she was most proud to tell me about was the fact that she loves to volunteer. And that's one of

the great parts of the American spirit, is people like Joan are willing to—she's willing to take time to make somebody's life better. So I want to thank you for that. Thank you for passing the word.

Ms. Gest. Thank you.

The President. You betcha.

Myrtle Jones. Where do you live, Myrtle?

Myrtle Jones. I live in Rancho Cucamonga.

The President. Yes. Right here with the home folks.

Ms. Jones. Yes, I am. And I've participated here—since 1988 I've belonged here.

The President. That's good.

Ms. Jones. And I'm a retired management. I managed three dry-cleaning establishments, and then I retired and did some in-home nursing and retired from that. And now I'm an elder in my church, and I volunteer here and do a lot of work here. And I also have three wonderful children: Rod, Dorothy, and Richard. I have six grandchildren, five great-grandchildren.

The President. Whew.

Ms. Jones. And I have managed on my own without the help from them. [*Laughter*]

The President. Yes, take that. [*Laughter*]

[*Ms. Jones made brief remarks.*]

The President. Myrtle, you need to get that four-page form, and you need to look at it, and you need to fill it out.

Ms. Jones. I will.

The President. Because I think you're going to find the strengthened Medicare program is going to help you a lot.

Ms. Jones. Oh, it will.

The President. It really will.

Ms. Jones. It really will.

The President. The purpose of coming here today—thank you all for doing this, by the way. The purpose of coming was to encourage—good job. The purpose of coming was to inform as many folks as we can, obviously, in person and on TV, that Medicare has been strengthened, and Medicare has been modernized, and that if you're really interested in helping a senior or a senior helping yourself, look into this plan. Look into what's available.

And you can find out on medicare.gov, or you can call 1–800–MEDICARE. If you get a form, fill it out. When they send you a form to determine whether or not you're going to be eligible for this enhanced drug benefit from the Federal Government, fill it out. It doesn't do any harm to fill it out, and if you need help, somebody will help you fill it out.

The Government has an obligation to our seniors to provide a health care system. We have done that for years. Now we took it upon ourselves to make sure the health care system we provided was strong and modern, and we have done that. And pretty soon, people are going to be able to make choices if they want to. And our job at the Government level and job at the grassroot level and jobs in the community centers and community groups is to help people understand what's available.

I want to thank you all for giving me and Laura a chance to come back to Rancho Cucamonga. It's a beautiful place you got here. We appreciate your hospitality. May God bless you all. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:40 p.m. at the James L. Brulte Senior Center. In his remarks, he referred to former California State Senator Jim Brulte; Mayor William "Bill" J. Alexander of Rancho Cucamonga, CA; Mayor Paul S. Leon of Ontario, CA; and former President Saddam Hussein of Iraq.

Remarks on the 60th Anniversary of V–J Day in San Diego, California
August 30, 2005

Thank you all. Thanks for the warm welcome. It's good to be back in California; good to be here at North Island. This is the birthplace of naval aviation, and I want to thank you for making this son of a naval aviator feel right at home.

This morning our hearts and prayers are with our fellow citizens along the gulf coast who have suffered so much from Hurricane Katrina. These are trying times for the people of these communities. We know that many are anxious to return to their homes. It's not possible at this moment. Right now our priority is on saving lives, and we are still in the midst of search and rescue operations. I urge everyone in the affected areas to continue to follow instructions from State and local authorities.

The Federal, State, and local governments are working side by side to do all we can to help people get back on their feet, and we have got a lot of work to do. Our teams and equipment are in place, and we're beginning to move in the help that people need. Americans who wish to help can call 1–800–HELP–NOW, or log on to redcross.org, or get in touch with the Salvation Army. The good folks in Louisiana and Mississippi and Alabama and other affected areas are going to need the help and compassion and prayers of our fellow citizens.

As we deliver relief to our citizens to the south, our troops are defending all our citizens from threats abroad. In the war on terror, all of you gathered here today are playing a critical role. Our naval aviators are displaying their fantastic skill in bringing justice to our enemies. Our sailors on Navy ships are patrolling the high seas. You're maintaining those ships and keeping them ready for battle. You're serving on special operations teams that are hunting the Taliban and Al Qaida fighters in the mountains of Afghanistan. And our Marine units are bringing our terrorists to justice in Iraq. However you are serving, each of you is defending our Nation and bringing honor to the uniform, and your Commander in Chief and your country is proud of your service.

I'm also proud to stand with those whose achievements we commemorate today, the military veterans of World War II. In war, America called you from your farms and your schools and your factories to defeat two of the most ruthless armies the world has known. In victory, America counted on you to extend a helping hand, to lift up a defeated foe. And in a lasting peace that has been your greatest legacy, America confirmed the power of freedom to transform the bitterest of enemies into the closest of friends.

Your victory came at great cost, and many of the heroes who fought by your side would not live to make the return journey home. More than 400,000 Americans gave their lives in that war, and some of them are buried a few miles from here at Fort Rosecrans National Cemetery. At a funeral sermon delivered after a battle that had taken the lives of thousands of Americans, a rabbi said, "Out of this, and from this suffering and sorrow of those who mourn this, will come, we promise, the birth of a new freedom for the sons of men everywhere."

Today, your hair is whitened. Your steps have slowed. Yet you have seen, in your lifetime, the rabbi's promise come true. The freedom that was born of your sacrifice has lifted millions of God's children across the Earth. This freedom is your monument to your fallen friends, your gift to their children and grandchildren, and your sacred bond with generations of patriots past and present who have worn the Nation's uniform.

As we look into your faces, we see the same quiet resolve that defeated our enemies, and we count it a privilege to be the citizens of the country that you served. We pray that your comrades you have lost found peace with their Creator, and we honor your sacrifice by recommitting ourselves to the great ideals for which you fought and bled.

I'm honored today to be traveling with the First Lady of the United States, Laura Bush. I want to thank Admiral Zortman, the commander of the Naval Air Force, U.S. Pacific Fleet, for his introduction. And thank you for your service, Admiral.

I'm proud to be here today with a man who is doing an excellent job for the United States military, the Secretary of Defense, Donald Rumsfeld. On V–J Day in 1945, Secretary Rumsfeld was selling newspapers at the Coronado Ferry, Coronado, California. He went on to be a Navy pilot. And today, he's a trusted adviser in my Cabinet. Mr. Secretary, proud to have you here.

I want to thank the chairman of the Armed Services Committee, Duncan Hunter. Congressman Hunter is with us today. Congressman Duncan Hunter is, today, here with his dad, Robert Hunter, who served in World War II. And he has a son who is a proud marine in Iraq.

I want to thank Secretary Tom Johnson of the California Department of Veteran Affairs. I want to thank Mayor Tom Smisek and his wife, Peggy. He's the mayor of Coronado. I appreciate you, Mr. Mayor.

I want to thank Vice Admiral Barry Costello, Rear Admiral Mike Miller, Rear Admiral Len Hering, Captain Tim Alexander. I want to thank Command Master Chief Mick Fulton, Chief Petty Officer Swisher. I want to thank all the men and women who wear the uniform for greeting us today.

We're proud to be in the company of Medal of Honor recipients Robert Modrzejewski, Jay Vargas, Red Millett, John Finn, John McGinty. Thank you for coming. Thank you for your courage.

Finally, I want to thank Sybil Stockdale, the wife of Admiral James Stockdale, for being with us today.

Sixty years ago this Friday, General Douglas MacArthur accepted the Japanese surrender aboard the USS *Missouri* in Tokyo Bay. With Japan's surrender, the last of our enemies in World War II was defeated, and a world war that began for America in the Pacific came to an end in the Pacific.

As we mark this anniversary, we are again a nation at war. Once again, war came to our shores with a surprise attack that killed thousands in cold blood. Once again, we face determined enemies who follow a ruthless ideology that despises everything America stands for. Once again, America and our allies are waging a global campaign with forces deployed on virtually every continent. And once again, we will not rest until victory is America's and our freedom is secure.

In the midst of this struggle, we have confidence in our cause because we know that America has faced down brutal enemies before. We have confidence in our cause because we've seen the power of freedom to overcome the darkness of tyranny and terror. And we have confidence in our cause because we know the character and courage of those who wear the uniform of the United States military.

Fifty years ago, we saw that character and that courage in men such as Leon Stone, who was a young Navy sailor aboard the battleship *West Virginia*, supporting the marines at Iwo Jima. We saw that courage in men such as Jim Simpson, who was one of those marines. They didn't know each other, but they came together to fight for America's security. They came together to join a mighty force that defeated the Japanese empire. Jim Simpson and Leon Stone did finally meet one day when Leon's son and Jim's daughter got married.

And today, their grandson, Captain Randy Stone, carries on a proud family tradition. Captain Stone is a marine officer now serving in Iraq. He knows that he and his generation are doing the same vital work in this war on terror that his grandparents did in World War II. He also knows how this struggle will end. Randy says, "I know we will win, because I see it in the eyes of the marines every morning. In their eyes is the sparkle of victory."

Captain Stone proudly wears the uniform just as his grandfathers did at Iwo Jima. He's guided by the same convictions they carried into battle. He shares the same willingness to serve a cause greater than himself. Many of you grew up with dads and granddads who have similar stories about their World War II service. They're the modest sons of a peaceful country. And a grateful nation thanks them for their sacrifice that preserved our freedom and our way of life.

The men and women who served in World War II belonged to a generation that kept its faith even when liberty's ultimate triumph was far from clear. When America was attacked at Pearl Harbor, our country was just emerging from a depression. More than half a dozen nations had larger armies than we did. In Asia and Europe, country after country had fallen before the disciplined armies of the militaristic regimes. These events led many to conclude that freedom had seen its day and that the future belonged to the hard men in Berlin and Tokyo.

Franklin Roosevelt refused to accept that democracy was finished. His optimism reflected his belief that the enemy's will to power could not withstand our will to live in freedom. He told the American people that our liberty depended on the success of liberty in other lands. And he called on Americans to defend that liberty, and millions answered the call. Within 4 years, America would recover from the devastation of Pearl Harbor. Within 4 years, we would fight and win a world war on two fronts.

Our victory in Asia was a particular triumph for the United States Navy. After Pearl Harbor, our Pacific Fleet was nearly destroyed, and the enemy appeared invincible. Those were dark days for freedom, but the darkness would not long prevail. From the daring first attack on Japanese soil led by Jimmy Doolittle and launched from the deck of the USS *Hornet*, to the Battle of Midway, to the flag-raising of Iwo Jima, our troops in the Pacific gave Americans back home reason to believe that President Roosevelt was right, that democracy was the most unconquerable of all forms of human society.

President Roosevelt was guided in victory in World War II by certain timeless principles. First, President Roosevelt believed that free nations could muster the resolve to defend themselves. In his day, that belief was sorely tested by a ruthless and determined enemy. Our troops in the Pacific found themselves up against a ferocity they had never before encountered—kamikaze pilots on suicidal missions, soldiers who fought to the last man, commanders animated by a fanatical belief that their nation was ordained to rule the Asian Continent. This enemy took many lives and left many grieving families. Yet in the end, they were no match for the forces of the United States and our allies. In the end, they were defeated by Americans who only months before had been farmers and bank clerks and factory hands. And in the end, the victorious children of democracy would help their defeated enemies rebuild and bring the taste of freedom to millions.

One of the first to recognize this truth was a member of Japan's surrender delegation aboard the USS *Missouri*. He went to the ceremony expecting to hear how the allies intended to take their vengeance on the defeated. Instead he heard General MacArthur speak about a future of freedom for Japan, and he realized the true source of America's military might. He wrote: "We

weren't beaten on the battlefield by the dint of superior arms; we were defeated in the spiritual conquest by virtue of a nobler idea." In World War II, wherever our troops raised the flag of victory, they would also sow the seeds of liberty, and as a result, the world is better off.

Secondly, President Roosevelt believed that the call to freedom is universal. Many of our closest allies did not agree with him about this, and the political map of Asia seemed to confirm their skepticism. At the beginning of the war, the Pacific had only two democracies: Australia and New Zealand. Even in nations where the rule was not harsh, the best that most Asian people could expect was benevolent colonialism. The Japanese claimed they were ridding the continent of foreign colonialism. But millions of Chinese and Burmese and other Asian people soon learned that Tokyo had simply replaced Western colonialism with a version that was often more harsh and repressive.

President Roosevelt, and later President Truman, wisely resolved that we would not make that mistake in our treatment of a defeated Japan. They understood that the sacrifices of Allied forces would mean nothing unless we used our victory to help the Japanese people transform their nation from tyranny to freedom. There were many doubters. American and Japanese experts claimed that the Japanese weren't ready for democracy.

In a letter to a friend back home, one of our soldiers on the ground offered a different view. Sergeant Richard Leonard's brother had been killed in fighting the Japanese, but after being stationed in Japan and meeting Japanese people, he found he could not hate them. He wrote: "Sure, we've got to occupy their country and watch them, but at the same time, we've got to help them and do everything possible to reconstruct them as a peace-loving nation." Sergeant Leonard was right. And America did just what he thought we should do. And as we look at what he and his generation accomplished in Japan, we know it is a mistake to believe that some people are not fit for equality and freedom our Creator intended for all.

Third, President Roosevelt believed that free nations are peaceful nations that would not threaten America. He knew that it was the lack of democracy in Japan that allowed an unelected group of militarists to take control of the state, threaten their neighbors, attack America, and plunge an entire region into war. And he knew that the best way to bring peace and stability to the region was by bringing freedom to Japan.

Democracy takes different forms in different cultures. Japanese democracy would be different from American democracy. The Japanese constitution would guarantee the universal freedoms that are the foundation of all genuine democracies, while, at the same time, reflecting the unique traditions and needs of the Japanese people. It allowed for both an electoral democracy and a heredity monarchy. It set Japan on the path to a free society.

With every step toward freedom, the Japanese economy flourished. With every step toward freedom, the Japanese became a model for others in the region. With every step toward freedom, the Japanese became a valued member of the world community, a force for peace and stability in the region, and a trusted and reliable ally of the United States of America.

I've experienced this transformation in a very personal way. During World War II, my dad was one of the Navy's youngest pilots and was shot down over the Pacific. At the same time, an official named Junya Koizumi served in Japan's legislative assembly. Today, their sons serve as the elected leaders of two free nations. Prime Minister Koizumi is a respected leader and one of my best friends in the international community. Our two democracies are among the world's closest allies. And all Americans are safer and more secure because the Japanese people are free.

Today, we must not forget the lessons of the past, and the lesson of this experience is clear: The most powerful weapon in the arsenal of democracy is the spirit of liberty. In the 20th century, the spirit of liberty worked to spread freedom from Japan and Germany to Eastern Europe and Latin America and Southeast Asia and Africa. And the spirit of liberty is at work today. Across the broader Middle East, we can see freedom's power to transform nations and deliver hope to people who have not known it. In Afghanistan and Iraq and Lebanon and the Palestinian Territories, people have gone to the polls and chosen their leaders in free elections. Their example is inspiring millions across that region to claim their liberty as well, and they will have it.

In Iraq, people have come together to write a constitution that guarantees freedom for all Iraqi citizens. The document they have produced protects fundamental human freedoms, including freedom for women, freedom of religion, freedom of assembly, freedom of conscience, and freedom of expression. This constitution is the result of democratic debate and compromise, and the Iraqi citizens can be proud of what they have accomplished.

As freedom advances across a troubled part of the world, it is once again opposed by fanatical adherence of a murderous ideology. And once again, the stakes are high. Now, as then, our enemies have made their fight a test of American credibility and resolve. Now, as then, they are trying to intimidate free people and break our will. And now, as then, they will fail.

They will fail because the terrorists of our century are making the same mistake that the followers of other totalitarian ideologies made in the last century. They believe that democracies are inherently weak and corrupt and can be brought to their knees. They looked at our response after the hostage crisis in Iran, the bombings of the Marine barracks in Lebanon, the first World Trade Center attack, the killing of American soldiers in Somalia, the destruction of two U.S. embassies in Africa, and the attack on the USS *Cole*. They concluded that free societies lack the courage and character to defend themselves against a determined enemy. Here are the words of Usama bin Laden that explain why he believed he could get away with the attacks of September the 11th, 2001: "We've seen in the last decade the decline of the American Government and the weakness of the American soldier, who is ready to wage cold wars and unprepared to fight long wars . . . After a few blows they ran in defeat . . . [They forgot] about being the world leader . . ." End quote.

After September the 11th, 2001, we've taught the terrorists a very different lesson. America will not run in defeat, and we will not forget our responsibilities. We have brought down two murderous regimes. We're driving terrorists from their sanctuaries. We're putting the terrorists on the run all across the world.

The terrorists and insurgents are now waging a brutal campaign of terror in Iraq. They kill innocent men and women and children in the hopes of intimidating Iraqis. They're trying to scare them away from democracy. They're trying to break the will of the American people. Their goal is to turn Iraq into a failed state, like Afghanistan was under the Taliban. If Zarqawi and bin Laden gain control of Iraq, they would create a new training ground for future terrorist attacks. They'd seize oil fields to fund their ambitions. They could recruit more terrorists by claiming an historic victory over the United States and our coalition.

Our goal is clear as well. We will defeat the terrorists. We'll build a free Iraq that will fight terrorists instead of giving them aid and sanctuary. A free Iraq will offer people throughout the Middle East a hopeful alternative to the hateful ideology being peddled by the terrorists. A free Iraq will show that when America gives its word, America keeps its word.

That choice—this is the choice we face: Do we return to the pre-September the 11th mindset of isolation and retreat, or do we continue to take the fight to the enemy and support our allies in the broader Middle East? I've made my decision. We will stay on the offensive. We will stand with the people of Iraq, and we will prevail.

We will prevail because this generation is determined to meet the threats of our time. We will prevail because this generation wants to leave a more hopeful world for our children and grandchildren. We will prevail because the desire to live in freedom is embedded in the soul of every man, woman, and child on this Earth. And we will prevail because our freedom is defended by the greatest force for liberation that humankind has ever known, the men and women of the United States Armed Forces.

In this war, some of our best citizens have made the ultimate sacrifice. We mourn the loss of every life. We pray for their loved ones. And we will honor their sacrifice by completing the mission and laying the foundation for peace.

Sixty years ago, American forces made the same type of sacrifice and helped liberate two continents and made our world a more peaceful place. The men and women of World War II brought honor to the uniform and to our flag and to our country. With each passing day, their ranks thin, but the peace they built endures. And we will never let the new enemies of a new century destroy with cowardice what these Americans built with courage.

Sixty years after V–J Day, our military veterans can take heart from the example they see right here in San Diego. Those of you who wear the Nation's uniform today are every bit as selfless and dedicated to liberty as the generations that came before. And when we will look at you, we know our freedom is in good hands.

It is men and women like you who keep us free. It is the spirit of liberty that keeps you strong, and it is the history that gives us confidence to know that in the vital work of spreading liberty, America and those of us who love freedom will prevail.

May God bless you all, and may God continue to bless America.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:04 a.m. at Naval Air Station North Island. In his remarks, he referred to Vice Adm. James M. Zortman, USN, commander, Naval Air Forces and Naval Air Force, U.S. Pacific Fleet; Mayor Tom Smisek of Coronado, CA; Vice Adm. Barry M. Costello, USN, commander, Third Fleet; Rear Adm. Michael H. Miller, USN, commander, Carrier Strike Group Seven and USS *Ronald Reagan* Strike Group; Rear Adm. Leendert "Len" R. Hering, Sr., USN, commander, Navy Regional Northwest and Naval Surface Group, Pacific Northwest; Capt. Townsend "Tim" G. Alexander, USN, commanding officer, and Master Chief Michael "Mick" F. Fulton, USN, command master chief, Naval Base Coronado; Chief Petty Officer Chet Swisher, USN (Ret.), director, Veterans Memorial Center, San Diego, CA; Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi of Japan; Usama bin Laden, leader of the Al Qaida terrorist organization; and senior Al Qaida associate Abu Musab Al Zarqawi.

Remarks on the Relief Efforts for Hurricane Katrina
August 31, 2005

I've just received an update from Secretary Chertoff and other Cabinet Secretaries involved on the latest developments in Louisiana, Mississippi, and Alabama. As

we flew here today, I also asked the pilot to fly over the gulf coast region so I could see firsthand the scope and magnitude of the devastation.

The vast majority of New Orleans, Louisiana, is under water. Tens of thousands of homes and businesses are beyond repair. A lot of the Mississippi gulf coast has been completely destroyed. Mobile is flooded. We are dealing with one of the worst natural disasters in our Nation's history.

And that's why I've called the Cabinet together. The people in the affected regions expect the Federal Government to work with the State government and local government with an effective response. I have directed Secretary of Homeland Security Mike Chertoff to chair a Cabinet-level task force to coordinate all our assistance from Washington. FEMA Director Mike Brown is in charge of all Federal response and recovery efforts in the field. I've instructed them to work closely with State and local officials as well as with the private sector to ensure that we're helping, not hindering, recovery efforts. This recovery will take a long time. This recovery will take years.

Our efforts are now focused on three priorities. Our first priority is to save lives. We're assisting local officials in New Orleans in evacuating any remaining citizens from the affected area. I want to thank the State of Texas and particularly Harris County and the city of Houston and officials with the Houston Astrodome for providing shelter to those citizens who found refuge in the Superdome in Louisiana. Buses are on the way to take those people from New Orleans to Houston.

FEMA has deployed more than 50 disaster medical assistance teams from all across the country to help those in the affected areas. FEMA has deployed more than 25 urban search and rescue teams with more than 1,000 personnel to help save as many lives as possible. The United States Coast Guard is conducting search and rescue missions. They're working alongside local officials, local assets. The Coast Guard has rescued nearly 2,000 people to date.

The Department of Defense is deploying major assets to the region. These include the USS *Bataan* to conduct search and rescue missions, eight swift water rescue teams, the Iwo Jima Amphibious Readiness Group to help with disaster response equipment, and the hospital ship USNS *Comfort* to help provide medical care.

The National Guard has nearly 11,000 guardsmen on State active duty to assist Governors and local officials with security and disaster response efforts. FEMA and the Army Corps of Engineers are working around the clock with Louisiana officials to repair the breaches in the levees so we can stop the flooding in New Orleans.

Our second priority is to sustain lives by ensuring adequate food, water, shelter, and medical supplies for survivors and dedicated citizens—dislocated citizens. FEMA is moving supplies and equipment into the hardest hit areas. The Department of Transportation has provided more than 400 trucks to move 1,000 truckloads containing 5.4 million Meals, Ready-to-Eat or MREs, 13.4 million liters of water, 10,400 tarps, 3.4 million pounds of ice, 144 generators, 20 containers of prepositioned disaster supplies, 135,000 blankets, and 11,000 cots. And we're just starting.

There are more than 78,000 people now in shelters. HHS and CDC are working with local officials to identify operating hospital facilities so we can help them, help the nurses and doctors provide necessary medical care. They're distributing medical supplies, and they're executing a public health plan to control disease and other health-related issues that might arise.

Our third priority is executing a comprehensive recovery effort. We're focusing on restoring power and lines of communication that have been knocked out during the storm. We'll be repairing major roads and bridges and other essential means of transportation as quickly as possible.

There's a lot of work we're going to have to do. In my flyover, I saw a lot of destruction on major infrastructure. Repairing the infrastructure, of course, is going to be a key priority.

The Department of Energy is approving loans from the Strategic Petroleum Reserve to limit disruptions in crude supplies for refineries. A lot of crude production has been shut down because of the storm. I instructed Secretary Bodman to work with refiners, people who need crude oil, to alleviate any shortage through loans. The Environmental Protection Agency has granted a nationwide waiver for fuel blends to make more gasoline and diesel fuel available throughout the country. This will help take some pressure off of gas price. But our citizens must understand, this storm has disrupted the capacity to make gasoline and distribute gasoline.

We're also developing a comprehensive plan to immediately help displaced citizens. This will include housing and education and health care and other essential needs. I've directed the folks in my Cabinet to work with local folks, local officials, to develop a comprehensive strategy to rebuild the communities affected. And there's going to be a lot of rebuilding done. I can't tell you how devastating the sights were.

I want to thank the communities in surrounding States that have welcomed their neighbors during an hour of need. A lot of folks left the affected areas and found refuge with a relative or a friend, and I appreciate you doing that. I also want to thank the American Red Cross and the Salvation Army and the Catholic Charities and all other members of the armies of compassion. I think the folks in the affected areas are going to be overwhelmed when they realize how many Americans want to help them.

At this stage in the recovery efforts, it's important for those who want to contribute, to contribute cash. You can contribute cash to a charity of your choice, but make sure you designate that gift for hurricane relief. You can call 1–800–HELP–NOW, or you can get on the Red Cross web page, redcross.org. The Red Cross needs our help. And I urge our fellow citizens to contribute.

The folks on the gulf coast are going to need the help of this country for a long time. This is going to be a difficult road. The challenges that we face on the ground are unprecedented. But there's no doubt in my mind we're going to succeed. Right now the days seem awfully dark for those affected. I understand that. But I'm confident that, with time, you can get your life back in order. New communities will flourish; the great city of New Orleans will be back on its feet; and America will be a stronger place for it.

The country stands with you. We'll do all in our power to help you. May God bless you. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 5:11 p.m. in the Rose Garden at the White House.

Remarks Following a Meeting With Former President George H.W. Bush and Former President William J. Clinton
September 1, 2005

Relief Efforts for Hurricane Katrina

Good afternoon. Thanks for coming. I'm honored to be with former Presidents Bush and Clinton. Thank you all for being here.

We just spent some time talking about the devastation caused by Hurricane Katrina. I brought them up to date on what I know about the latest developments there on the ground. We're united in our sympathy. We're united in our determination to help the good people that have been affected by this hurricane.

I'm in close contact with Secretary Chertoff. He was in the Oval Office earlier today. He's in close contact with FEMA Director Brown.

I want to make sure I fully understand the relief efforts and the extent of the relief efforts and the progress of the relief efforts. After all, we're dealing with one of the largest relief efforts in our Nation's history, and the Federal Government has got an important role to play. Our first priority, of course, is to save lives. There are over 80 FEMA teams that have been deployed to the gulf coast to conduct search and rescue missions. I want to thank those who are working long hours, for their dedication to saving lives. We've got Coast Guard folks and Navy and Army and Air Force and National Guardsmen from many different States that are delivering needed supplies and providing the rescue missions, trying to reach those in danger.

We're working hard to repair the breaches in the levees. Federal, State, and local agencies are also cooperating to sustain life. That means getting food and water to those who are stranded. Medical personnel and local officials are helping hospital patients and people gathered in the Superdome to evacuate. Again, I want to thank the folks in Texas for welcoming those people. Bus caravans are shuttling back and forth between Houston and New Orleans to get those folks to Houston. Law enforcement and National Guardsmen and local leaders are working to restore public order.

Earlier today, General Blum along with Mike Chertoff gave me a briefing about the number of guards-folks trained in police work that will be moving into New Orleans as well as other law enforcement officials from around the area. As we speak, people are moving into the New Orleans area to maintain law and order. I thank them for their good work. Government agencies are working with faith-based and community groups to find shelters for thousands of displaced persons.

And finally, we're moving forward with a comprehensive recovery strategy. We're working hard to restore electric power, repair transportation infrastructure, restart energy production, and of course, strategize as to how to provide housing for these folks.

I met with Chairman Greenspan at lunch as well as the economic team to evaluate the impact of Hurricane Katrina. We particularly spent a lot of time talking about the damage done to our energy infrastructure and its effect on the availability and price of gasoline. In our judgment, we view this storm as a temporary disruption that is being addressed by the Government and by the private sector. We've taken immediate steps to address the issue. The Secretary of Energy is approving loans of crude oil from the Strategic Petroleum Reserve. The EPA has provided a temporary, nationwide waiver for fuel requirements so supplies of gasoline can move more easily within our country and so that we can attract more gasoline from overseas.

We're also working with energy companies to repair and reactivate major refineries and pipelines. The good folks must understand that major refineries have been shut down, which means it's going to be hard to get gasoline to some markets. We're working to help these pipelines get up and running. Pipelines carry refined product.

And so we're working with the majors—major oil companies to get the—with Colonial Pipeline so they can carry the products of the major oil companies, the refined products. Right now the Colonial Pipeline, which is a major pipeline serving the east coast, is back in operation but only at 50-percent capacity. We anticipate that as the days go by, more and more of that capacity will be restored. Other major pipelines are coming back online. But as I said, we're going to have a temporary disruption of gasoline product.

Another challenge we face is that the downed pipelines are causing the need to transport gasoline to needed markets by ship. Under current law, shipping between American ports can only take place on American ships, and there are currently not enough American ships to move the oil and gasoline to where it's needed. So today I've instructed Secretary of Homeland Security Chairman Chertoff to temporarily waive this requirement, so foreign ships can also help distribute oil and gasoline to where it's needed. Today's action will further help us move gasoline to accommodate the demands of the American citizens.

Steps we're taking will help address the problem of availability, but it's not going to solve it. Americans should be prudent in their use of energy during the course of the next few weeks. Don't buy gas if you don't need it.

This recovery is going to be a long process. It's going to take a lot of hard work and patience and resolve. It's also going to require a lot of money. And the Federal Government will do its part, but the private sector needs to do its part as well. And that's why I've asked Presidents Bush and Clinton to lead a nationwide fundraising effort to help the victims of Hurricane Katrina.

In the days ahead, the former Presidents will ask Americans to open their hearts and their wallets to help those in need. And they're going to talk to large corporations and small businesses and individual citizens across the Nation. The contributions will benefit the relief organizations that are doing vital work on the ground. We're going to take a look and make sure that the money raised is money needed. Right now if our fellow citizens want to help, they ought to give a cash donation to the Red Cross, which they can find at phone number 1–800–HELP–NOW.

I was so proud of the efforts that President Clinton and President Bush did to help the victims of the tsunami relief. Our country marveled at their capacity to rally our citizens and to work together. And once again, I've asked them to work to help the needs of those who hurt. And once again, I'm confident that the American people will respond.

I know this is an agonizing time, or we all know this is an agonizing time for the people of the gulf coast. I ask their continued patience as recovery operations unfold. I can assure them that the thoughts and prayers of the entire Nation are with them and their loved ones. I'm also confident that when it's all said and done, the efforts to rebuild the great city of New Orleans and to rebuild those communities in Mississippi and to help the folks in Alabama will make this Nation a stronger place.

May God bless you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:45 p.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Lt. Gen. H. Steven Blum, Chief, National Guard Bureau.

Memorandum on Assistance to Federal Employees Affected by Hurricane Katrina
September 1, 2005

Memorandum for the Heads of Executive Departments and Agencies

Subject: Assistance to Federal Employees Affected by Hurricane Katrina

I have directed the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) to establish an emergency leave transfer program to assist employees affected by Hurricane Katrina. The emergency leave transfer program will permit employees in an executive agency to donate unused annual leave for transfer to employees of the same or other agencies who have been adversely affected by Hurricane Katrina and who need additional time off from work without having to use their own paid leave.

GEORGE W. BUSH

Letter to the Speaker of the House of Representatives Transmitting a Supplemental Appropriation for Response and Recovery Efforts in Areas Struck by Hurricane Katrina
September 1, 2005

Dear Mr. Speaker:

As I informed the Nation yesterday, we are dealing with one of the worst natural disasters in our country's history. Residents of the Gulf Coast States affected by the hurricane have lost loved ones, have lost homes, and have been displaced from their communities. My Administration is committed to ensuring that they will have the full support of the Federal Government.

Due to the catastrophic nature of Hurricane Katrina, I am asking the Congress to consider expeditiously the enclosed request, totaling $10.5 billion, for an emergency FY 2005 supplemental appropriation for the Departments of Homeland Security and Defense. These funds will ensure that Federal response and recovery efforts continue uninterrupted.

I hereby designate this proposal in the amount requested herein as an emergency requirement. This request responds to urgent needs associated with immediate response and recovery efforts associated with Hurricane Katrina in Mississippi, Louisiana, Alabama, and other affected areas.

The enclosed request requires immediate action by the Congress to ensure that the Federal response to this disaster continues uninterrupted. I anticipate making a further request in the coming weeks that will provide for a comprehensive response and recovery effort after fully assessing the impact of the hurricane. The details of this request are set forth in the enclosed letter from the Director of the Office of Management and Budget.

Sincerely,

GEORGE W. BUSH

Remarks on Departure for a Tour of Gulf Coast Areas Damaged by Hurricane Katrina
September 2, 2005

Secretary Chertoff and I just finished a meeting with Secretary Rumsfeld, General Myers, other members of my Cabinet, as well as General Honore, Admiral Keating, who is in charge of NORTHCOM—General Honore is our active duty general on the ground in Louisiana as well—and Mike Brown, who is the head of FEMA.

There's a lot of aid surging toward those who have been affected, millions of gallons of water, millions of tons of food. We're making progress about pulling people out of the Superdome. There's an issue right now at the convention center of New Orleans that General Honore briefed us on. We're trying to get food and medicine to the convention center. He's working with the Governor and the adjutant general and the mayor to deploy 600 of the newly arrived MPs to secure the site, so that the food and medicine and water can get in there.

A lot of people are working hard to help those who've been affected, and I want to thank the people for their efforts. The results are not acceptable. I'm headed down there right now. I'm looking forward to talking to the people on the ground. I want to assure the people of the affected areas and this country that we'll deploy the assets necessary to get the situation under control, to get the help to the people who've been affected, and that we're beginning long-term planning to help those who have been displaced, as well as long-term planning to help rebuild the communities that have been affected.

I'm looking forward to my trip down there and looking forward to thanking those on the ground and looking forward to assure people that we'll get on top of this situation, and we're going to help people who need help.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:02 a.m. on the South Lawn at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Gov. Kathleen Babineaux Blanco of Louisiana; Lt. Gen. Russel L. Honore, USA, commanding general, First United States Army; Maj. Gen. Bennett C. Landreneau, Adjutant General, Louisiana National Guard; and Mayor C. Ray Nagin of New Orleans, LA.

Remarks on the Aftermath of Hurricane Katrina in Mobile, Alabama
September 2, 2005

The President. Well, first I want to say a few things. I am incredibly proud of our Coast Guard. We have got courageous people risking their lives to save life. And I want to thank the commanders, and I want to thank the troops over there for representing the best of America.

I want to congratulate the Governors for being leaders. You didn't ask for this when you swore in, but you're doing a heck of a job. And the Federal Government's job is big, and it's massive, and we're going to do it. Where it's not working right, we're going to make it right. Where it is working right, we're going to duplicate it elsewhere. We have a responsibility at the Federal level to help save life, and that's the primary focus right now. Every life is precious, and so we're going to spend a lot

of time saving lives, whether it be in New Orleans or on the coast of Mississippi.

We have a responsibility to help clean up this mess, and I want to thank the Congress for acting as quickly as you did. Step one is to appropriate $10.5 billion. But I've got to warn everybody, that's just the beginning. That's a small downpayment for the cost of this effort to help the good folks here rebuild.

We are going to restore order in the city of New Orleans, and we're going to help supplement the efforts of the Mississippi Guard and others to restore order in parts of Mississippi. And I want to thank you for your strong statement of zero tolerance. The people of this country expect there to be law and order, and we're going to work hard to get it. In order to make sure there's less violence, we've got to get food to people. And that's a primary mission, is to get food to people. And there's a lot of food moving. And now the—it's one thing to get it moving to a station; it's the next thing to get it in the hands of the people. And that's where we're going to spend a lot of time focusing.

We've got a lot of rebuilding to do. First, we're going to save lives and stabilize the situation, and then we're going to help these communities rebuild. The good news is—and it's hard for some to see it now—that out of this chaos is going to come a fantastic gulf coast, like it was before. Out of the rubbles of Trent Lott's house—he's lost his entire house—there's going to be a fantastic house. And I'm looking forward to sitting on the porch. [*Laughter*]

Governor Bob Riley. He'll be glad to have you.

The President. Out of New Orleans is going to come that great city again. That's what's going to happen. But now we're in the darkest days, and so we got a lot of work to do. And I'm down here to thank people. I'm down here to comfort people. I'm down here to let people know that we're going to work with the States and the local folks with a strategy to get this thing solved.

Now, I also want to say something about the compassion of the people of Alabama and Mississippi and Louisiana and surrounding States. I want to thank you for your compassion. Now is the time to love a neighbor like you'd like to be loved yourself.

Governor Riley announced the fact that they're going to open up homes in military bases for stranded folks. And that's going to be very important and helpful.

My dad and Bill Clinton are going to raise money for Governors' funds. The Governors of Louisiana, Mississippi, and Alabama will have monies available to them to help deal with the long-term consequences of this storm.

The faith-based groups and the community-based groups throughout this part of the world and the country, for that matter, are responding. If you want to help, give cash money to the Red Cross and the Salvation Army. That's where the first help will come. There's going to be plenty of opportunities to help later on, but right now the immediate concern is to save lives and get food and medicine to people so we can stabilize the situation.

Again, I want to thank you all for—and Brownie, you're doing a heck of a job. The FEMA Director is working 24—they're working 24 hours a day.

Again, my attitude is, if it's not going exactly right, we're going to make it go exactly right. If there's problems, we're going to address the problems. And that's what I've come down to assure people of. And again, I want to thank everybody.

And I'm not looking forward to this trip. I got a feel for it when I flew over before. It—for those who have not—trying to conceive what we're talking about, it's as if the entire gulf coast were obliterated by a—the worst kind of weapon you can imagine. And now we're going to go try to comfort people in that part of the world.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:35 a.m. at the Mobile Regional Airport. In his remarks, he referred to Gov. Kathleen Babineaux Blanco of Louisiana; Gov. Haley Barbour of Mississippi; and Gov. Bob Riley of Alabama.

Remarks Following a Walking Tour of Areas Damaged by Hurricane Katrina and an Exchange With Reporters in Biloxi, Mississippi
September 2, 2005

The President. I'm proud to be here with the mayor of Biloxi. The reason I'm proud to be here with him and with the Governor and Senators is because in spite of this terrible tragedy, their spirits are high. It's hard to describe the devastation that we have just walked through. I just talked to a fellow who was raised in a house that used to be, and he's got rubble surrounding him, and I said, "Are you doing all right?" and he said, "I'm doing fine. I'm alive, and my mother is alive." I talked to a fellow who runs a wrecking service—I think it's a wrecking service. He said, "I witnessed Camille. We went through Camille, and we'll go through this storm, Katrina."

You know, there's a lot of sadness, of course, but there's also a spirit here in Mississippi that is uplifting. I want to thank the Governor for his strong leadership. He set some clear parameters and has followed through on helping calm everybody's nerves. I want to thank the mayor. Neither of them asked for this when they got elected. Now they're called upon to help solve the problem.

And I've come down here, one, to take a look at the damage first hand—and I'm telling you, it's worse than imaginable—and secondly, to tell the good people of this part of the world that the Federal Government is going to help. Our first job is to save life. And earlier today, I had a chance to meet with some chopper drivers, guys dangling off of cables that are pulling people out of harm's way. And I want to thank them for their hard work.

We're going to stabilize the situation, and then get food and medicine and water. I traveled today with the head of the Red Cross and the Salvation Army, and people here are going to see compassion pour in here. There's a lot of folks in America that want to help. If you want to help, give cash to the Salvation Army and the Red Cross. We can ask for other help later on, but right now we need to get food and clothes and medicine to the people. And we'll do so. And one of the main delivery systems will be the armies of compassion.

We're going to clean all this mess up. The Federal Government is going to—will spend money to clean it up. The first downpayment will be signed tonight by me as a result of the good work of the Senate and the House—$10½ billion. But that's just the beginning.

But the people have got to understand that out of this rubble is going to come a new Biloxi, Mississippi. It's hard to envision it right now. When you're standing amidst all that rubble, it's hard to think about a new city. But when you talk to folks that have been through Camille and have seen what happens and you listen to the spirit of people, you realize, Mr. Mayor, that after a lot of hard work, people are going to be—people will be proud of the effort. And I want to thank you for your leadership here. And Haley, I want to thank you for yours.

Again, I want to thank Trent and Thad. They're going to be very important Members of the—they are important Members of the Senate, and they're going to be an

important part of this—making sure that we fund this recovery effort.

I'll answer a couple of questions, then I'm going to go.

Aftermath of Hurricane Katrina

Q. Mr. President, were you prepared for the vastness of the destruction?

The President. I don't think anybody can be prepared for the vastness of this destruction. You can look at a picture, but until you sit on that doorstep of a house that used to be or stand by the rubble, you just can't imagine it.

And we took a low—we took a low chopper ride from here—to here, and we're going to take it on over to New Orleans here. And the destruction is unbelievable. And it's destruction on the coast, and it's destruction off the coast. And we've got a lot of work to do.

Terry [Terence Hunt, Associated Press].

Iraq/Hurricane Katrina

Q. One of the things you hear is people saying, "A lot of resources are being devoted to Iraq; now this country needs them." And they're frustrated about that. What do you say to the people who say, "There's too much money being spent on Iraq, and it's time to bring them home?"

The President. I just completely disagree. We've got a job to defend this country in the war on terror, and we've got a job to bring aid and comfort to the people of the gulf coast. And we'll do both. We've got plenty of resources to do both.

Somebody questioned me the other day about—do we have enough National Guard troops? Of course we do. These Governors have got compacts with other States. If they need to call upon another State, the State will send Guard troops. And the people have just got to know, we've got what it takes to do more than one thing, and we'll secure our country from the terrorists, and we'll help rebuild this part of the world.

Recovery Efforts

Q. This morning, when you said the results are "not acceptable," what specifically were you talking about?

The President. Well, I'm talking about the fact that we don't have enough security in New Orleans yet. Results are acceptable here in Mississippi. You know, the results are acceptable in New Orleans when it comes to the hard work of the Coast Guard. But we need to get troops—we had 1,200 troops arrive yesterday, I'm told. We're going to have 1,200 today, 1,200 more. These are troops especially trained for military police work. They need to get in there. They need to stabilize that situation. They need to make sure that the food and medicine that is in place is given to the people that need the food and medicine.

I got a good report today about food and medicine getting to people that weren't getting it, but we'll find out if it's true when we get to New Orleans.

You know, this is a huge task that we're dealing with. And our jobs, as people in positions of responsibility, is not to be satisfied until the job is done as good as it can possibly be done. And that's what I was referring to. I'm certainly not denigrating the efforts of anybody. But the results can be better in New Orleans, and I intend to work with the folks to make it better.

And again, in Mississippi, we've got a different situation. We've got a Guard that is in place, activated. Haley made some clear rules and is following through on them. But the task, in both places—the tasks are enormous. And it's going to take a while. This is—our fellow citizens must understand that we're talking years. Now, we're not talking years to get people rescued; we're talking days. And we're not talking years to get infrastructure back up here. We're talking weeks to get the electricity running.

I got some good news on the pipeline, the Colonial Pipeline. We thought it would be at 47-percent capacity, at least I was briefed that yesterday. I'm told it's going to be significantly more than that, which is good news. It means that one of the problem areas that Haley was talking to me about is how—and the mayor—was how do you get fuel to these communities. And obviously, the more fuel going through pipelines, the more fuel will be available not only here in the affected areas but up and down the Southeast of the country.

And listen, we're going to have a problem this weekend when it comes to gasoline, just like they've got a problem here. But we're addressing it. We're—the EPA suspended rules so that we could use—which attracted—suspended rules for types of gasoline which attracted fuel from overseas. That's good. We're swapping oil out of the SPRo. We're making sure that there's oil to be processed in the refineries. They're working hard to get these ports open.

Trent was telling me that we got to get that port of Pascagoula open so we can get ships of foreign crude oil to the refinery. And we're—we just got a lot of work to do. The good news is we know what we're going to do, and we're going to get it done.

Jennifer [Jennifer Loven, Associated Press].

Q. Sir, you talk about fixing what's wrong and you talk about the results not being acceptable, but there are a lot of people wondering why you weren't fixing the problems yesterday or the day before, and why the richest country on Earth can't get food and water to those people that need it?

The President. The levees broke on Tuesday in New Orleans. On Wednesday, we—and Thursday we started evacuating people. A lot of people have left that city. A lot of people have been pulled out on buses. It's—I am satisfied with the response. I'm not satisfied with all the results. They started pulling people off roofs immediately. They started rallying—we started rallying choppers to get people off rooftops, started saving lives. I mean, thousands of people's lives have been saved immediately, and that's good news.

This is one of the worst storms in our Nation's history. New Orleans got hit by two storms, one, the hurricane and then the flood. And it's going to take a monumental effort to continue moving forward, but we will. And this is a nation that has done a lot of big things before, and this is going to be one of the biggest, which is to recover from one of the worst storms, if not the worst storm. Haley called it the worst; I'm calling it one of the worst storms in the Nation's history.

Yes.

Housing

Q. Mr. President, thank you for coming. We appreciate it very much. There's a need for immediate housing and long-term housing. Many people right now have no shelter, and on top of that, many people do not have flood insurance. They never expected a tidal surge of this magnitude. What can you say about housing efforts?

The President. Well, I appreciate that. The—FEMA will be providing a lot of temporary housing. And that's one of the responsibilities that FEMA assumes, to find shelter for people.

And in terms of the longer term, the Government has got the capacity to make low-interest loans and help businesses get back going. And there will be a—again, once the situation gets stabilized, there will be the appropriate authorities here to start passing out the forms necessary for people to apply for the relief and the help they can get. But the Federal Government will be providing the temporary housing.

Rebuilding New Orleans

Q. Mr. President, I realize the first priority is, obviously, saving lives. But let me ask you about long-term planning in New Orleans. There are some who are starting

to say that since we're going to be spending billions in tax dollars to rebuild that great city, that we might want to think about building it in such a way where it's not below sea level again, whether it's somehow moved around or relocated or moved up. What are your thoughts on that?

The President. My thoughts are, we're going to get somebody who knows what they're talking about when it comes to rebuilding cities. I'm going to delegate. I'm going to call upon the best experts, starting with the people in New Orleans, and get opinions as we work with the local folks. We're going to help people rebuild, Stretch [Richard Keil, Bloomberg News]. That's what we're going to do. And we're going to listen to people who know what they're doing.

But my objective now, of course, is to save lives and get people out of New Orleans, and then—and make sure that those who are out of New Orleans and in New Orleans get food and help, just like in Mississippi. Mississippi people have got to understand that I know a lot of the focus is on New Orleans, but I'm thinking about Mississippi as well. I'm not only thinking about coastal Mississippi; I'm thinking about rural Mississippi, places in this part of the State that are remote and don't have electricity. And they just got to know that the Governor talked to me about it, and I listened very carefully about the problems facing these good folks. And one of the things we're going to concentrate on is getting these electric plants up and running and getting the power to the people so that they can have the electricity necessary to live a more normal life.

It's—these are tough times. This is a storm the likes of which, you know, I pray I never see again. It's the like—it's a storm the likes of which the people who have been through Camille, they said, "You know, Camille was terrible. We're never going to see anything like Camille again." Camille was in '69, and a guy said, "You know, we felt safe here in this part of the neighborhood because Camille didn't hit it." And sure enough, we witnessed a storm worse than Camille.

And again, I want to thank all the people that are working hard. You—we've seen line crews; we've seen firefighters from around the country. People around here are going to be amazed at the compassion that pours into this community. First things first: We've got to make them safe.

Mr. Mayor, again, thank you for your hospitality. Thank you for your compassion.

Mayor A.J. Holloway. Thank you, Mr. President.

The President. Governor, thanks for your leadership.

Governor Haley Barbour. Thanks for your help.

The President. Thank you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:15 p.m. In his remarks, he referred to Marsha J. Evans, president and chief executive officer, American Red Cross; and Commissioner W. Todd Bassett, national commander, Salvation Army.

Remarks on Hurricane Katrina Recovery Efforts in Kenner, Louisiana
September 2, 2005

The President. Listen, I want to thank the Governor of Louisiana and the mayor of New Orleans, Senator Landrieu, Senator Vitter and Congressman Jefferson, Congressman Jindal and General Blum. I have just completed a tour of some devastated country. I started in Alabama and worked our way down through Mississippi and

ended up here in one of America's great cities and saw firsthand the devastation that this city has gone through. I know the people of this part of the world are suffering, and I want them to know that there's a flow of progress. We're making progress. I want to thank the Governor for her hard work, and I want to thank the mayor.

I know there's some of the folks in the outlying parishes here in Louisiana wondering whether or not people are paying attention to them. We are. St. Charles, St. Bernard, Plaquemine Parish, I understand the devastation that you've gone through as well. So does the Governor——

Governor Kathleen Babineaux Blanco. St. Tammany.

The President. ——St. Tammany. So does the Governor, and so are the Senators. This is a devastating storm. This is a storm that's going to require immediate action now. I'm pleased to report, thanks to the good work of the adjutant general from Louisiana and troops that have been called in, that the convention center is secure. One of the objectives that we had today was to move in and secure that convention center and make sure the good folks there got food and water.

The caravans—the bus caravans are continuing on, as is the airlift. The people of this part of the world have got to understand—and by the way, we just came from the 17th Street levee. A lot of folks are working hard to repair that levee. They've been working around the clock, 24 hours a day. People from the Federal Government and the State government and the local government are working to breach that—to fill that breach. The mayor has been telling me, not only by telephone but here in person, how important it is that we get that breach filled and get that pump station up and running. And we went there to inspect the progress being done, and the people of New Orleans have got to understand, there's a lot of people working hard, and they're making good progress.

You know, I'm going to fly out of here in a minute, but I want you to know that I'm not going to forget what I've seen. I understand the devastation requires more than one day's attention. It's going to require the attention of this country for a long period of time. This is a—one of the worst natural disasters we have faced, with national consequences. And therefore, there will be a national response. And I look forward to continuing to work with the Governor and the mayor and the Members of the Senate and the House of Representatives to do our duty to help the good folks of this part of the world get back on their feet.

Here's what I believe. I believe that the great city of New Orleans will rise again and be a greater city of New Orleans. I believe the town where I used to come from, Houston, Texas, to enjoy myself, occasionally too much—[*laughter*]—will be that very same town, that it will be a better place to come to. That's what I believe. I believe the great State of Louisiana will get its feet back and become a vital contributor to the country.

I believe the people of Mississippi will recover. I understand we got a lot of work to do. And I understand it seems dark right now, but by working together and pulling together and capturing that great spirit of our country, a great city will rise again, a great State will be vibrant.

If you want to help, if you're listening to this broadcast, contribute cash to the Salvation Army and the Red Cross. There will be other opportunities to give, and we hope you do give. But right now, we need cash to the Salvation Army and the Red Cross. They're on the frontlines providing help to the people who need help.

May God bless the people of this part of the world, and may God continue to bless our country. Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 5:01 p.m. at Louis Armstrong New Orleans International Airport. In his remarks, he referred to Gov.

Kathleen Babineaux Blanco of Louisiana; Mayor C. Ray Nagin of New Orleans, LA; and Maj. Gen. Bennett C. Landreneau, Adjutant General, Louisiana National Guard.

Memorandum on Finding of a Severe Energy Supply Interruption
September 2, 2005

Memorandum for the Secretary of Energy, the Secretary of Homeland Security

Subject: Finding of a Severe Energy Supply Interruption

Recent events in connection with Hurricane Katrina have resulted in a "severe energy supply interruption" as defined in section 161(d) of the Energy Policy and Conservation Act (EPCA), 42 U.S.C. 6241(d). Based on the advice of the Secretary of Energy and on other information, I find and determine, in accordance with EPCA section 161(d), that a severe energy supply interruption exists because:

(a) an emergency situation exists and there is a significant reduction in supply which is of significant scope and duration;

(b) a severe increase in the price of petroleum products has resulted from such emergency situation; and

(c) such price increase is likely to or may cause a major adverse impact on the national economy.

For these reasons, the Secretary of Energy is authorized and directed to draw down and sell Strategic Petroleum Reserve petroleum pursuant to EPCA section 161 at a rate the Secretary may determine and in accordance with the Strategic Petroleum Reserve standard sales procedures now in effect. The drawdown and sale authorized and directed by this finding will allow the United States to meet its obligations under the international energy program. If the Secretary determines the circumstances leading to this finding no longer support initiation or continuation of a drawdown and sale of petroleum from the Strategic Petroleum Reserve, the Secretary is authorized to cancel in whole or in part any offer to sell petroleum as a part of any drawdown and sale pursuant to this finding.

The Secretary of Homeland Security already has waived the coastwise laws generally for the transportation of petroleum released from the Strategic Petroleum Reserve, whether pursuant to an exchange, sale, or otherwise, undertaken in response to the circumstances arising from Hurricane Katrina, and I direct the Secretary of Homeland Security to continue such waiver for the transportation of all petroleum withdrawn from the Strategic Petroleum Reserve during the drawdown pursuant to this finding.

GEORGE W. BUSH

The President's Radio Address
September 3, 2005

Good morning. Yesterday I saw the aftermath of one of the largest natural disasters ever to strike America. A vast coastline of towns and communities are flattened; one of our great cities is submerged. The human costs are incalculable.

Biloxi, I met Bronwynne Bassier and her sister, Kim. Bronwynne told me that the

only earthly possessions she has left were the clothes on her back. I also met relief and rescue workers who are performing heroically in difficult circumstances. They've been working around the clock, risking their own lives to save the lives of others. Yet, despite their best efforts, the magnitude of responding to a crisis over a disaster area that is larger than the size of Great Britain has created tremendous problems that have strained State and local capabilities. The result is that many of our citizens simply are not getting the help they need, especially in New Orleans. And that is unacceptable.

During my visit I discussed these problems at length with Governor Riley of Alabama, Governor Barbour of Mississippi, Governor Blanco of Louisiana, and Mayor Nagin of New Orleans. Each State will have its own set of challenges and issues to solve. Yet all of us agree that more can be done to improve our ability to restore order and deliver relief in a timely and effective manner.

This morning I received a briefing on the latest developments on the ground. Right now there are more than 21,000 National Guard troops operating in Louisiana and Mississippi, and more are on the way. More than 13,000 of these troops are in Louisiana. The main priority is to restore and maintain law and order and assist in recovery and evacuation efforts. In addition to these National Guard forces, the Department of Defense has deployed more than 4,000 active duty forces to assist in search and recovery and provide logistical and medical support.

Hour by hour, the situation on the ground is improving. Yet the enormity of the task requires more resources and more troops. Today I ordered the Department of Defense to deploy additional active duty forces to the region. Over the next 24 to 72 hours, more than 7,000 additional troops from the 82d Airborne, from the 1st Cavalry, the 1st Marine Expeditionary Force, and the 2d Marine Expeditionary Force will arrive in the affected areas. These forces will be on the ground and operating under the direct command of General Russ Honore.

Our priorities are clear: We will complete the evacuation as quickly and safely as possible. We will not let criminals prey on the vulnerable, and we will not allow bureaucracy to get in the way of saving lives.

Yesterday I also signed a $10.5 billion emergency aid package to fund our ongoing relief efforts. This is a downpayment on what will be a sustained Federal commitment to our fellow citizens along the gulf coast. I want to thank the Congress for their quick, bipartisan action, and I look forward to working with them in the days and weeks ahead.

I know that those of you who have been hit hard by Katrina are suffering. Many are angry and desperate for help. The tasks before us are enormous, but so is the heart of America. In America, we do not abandon our fellow citizens in their hour of need. And the Federal Government will do its part. Where our response is not working, we'll make it right. Where our response is working, we will duplicate it. We have a responsibility to our brothers and sisters all along the gulf coast, and we will not rest until we get this right and the job is done.

This week we've all been humbled by the awesome powers of Mother Nature. And when you stand on the porch steps where a home once stood, or look at row upon row of buildings that are completely under water, it's hard to imagine a bright future. But when you talk to the proud folks in the area, you see a spirit that cannot be broken.

The emergency along the gulf coast is ongoing. There's still a lot of difficult work ahead. All Americans can be certain our Nation has the character, the resources, and the resolve to overcome this disaster. We will comfort and care for the victims.

We will restore the towns and neighborhoods that have been lost in Louisiana, Mississippi, and Alabama. We will rebuild the great city of New Orleans. And we will once again show the world that the worst adversities bring out the best in America.

May God bless you, and may God continue to bless our country.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:06 a.m. in the Rose Garden at the White House. In his address, he referred to Gov. Bob Riley of Alabama; Gov. Haley Barbour of Mississippi; Gov. Kathleen Babineaux Blanco of Louisiana; Mayor C. Ray Nagin of New Orleans, LA; and Lt. Gen. Russel L. Honore, USA, commanding general, First United States Army. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of this address.

Remarks on the Death of Chief Justice William H. Rehnquist
September 4, 2005

Our Nation is saddened today by the news that Chief Justice William Rehnquist passed away last night. Laura and I send our respect and deepest sympathy to this good man's children, Jim, Janet, and Nancy. We send our respect to all the members of the Rehnquist family.

William H. Rehnquist was born and raised in Wisconsin. He was the grandson of Swedish immigrants. Like so many of his generation, he served in the Army during World War II. He went on to college with the help of the GI bill. He studied law at Stanford University. He graduated first in his class, that included his future colleague, Sandra Day O'Connor. Judge Rehnquist and his late wife, Nan, raised their family in Phoenix, where he built a career as one of Arizona's leading attorneys. He went on to even greater distinction in pubic service as an Assistant U.S. Attorney General, Associate Justice of the Supreme Court, and for the past 19 years, Chief Justice of the United States.

He was extremely well respected for his powerful intellect. He was respected for his deep commitment to the rule of law and his profound devotion to duty. He provided superb leadership for the Federal court system, improving the delivery of justice for the American people and earning the admiration of his colleagues throughout the judiciary.

Even during a period of illness, Chief Justice Rehnquist stayed on the job to complete the work of his final Supreme Court term. I was honored, and I was deeply touched when he came to the Capitol for the swearing-in last January. He was a man of character and dedication. His departure represents a great loss for the Court and for our country.

There are now two vacancies on the Supreme Court, and it will serve the best interests of the Nation to fill those vacancies promptly. I will choose in a timely manner a highly qualified nominee to succeed Chief Justice Rehnquist. As we look to the future of the Supreme Court, citizens of this Nation can also look with pride and appreciation on the career of our late Chief Justice.

More than half a century has passed since William H. Rehnquist first came to the Supreme Court as a young law clerk. All of his years, William Rehnquist revered the Constitution and laws of the United States. He led the judicial branch of Government with tremendous wisdom and skill. He honored America with a lifetime of service, and America will honor his memory.

May God bless the Rehnquist family. Thank you all very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:01 a.m. in the Roosevelt Room at the White House. The related proclamation of September 4 on the death of Chief Justice Rehnquist is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

Remarks at the American Red Cross Disaster Operations Center
September 4, 2005

I've come to the Red Cross to, one, thank the good folks here who are working here. We've got people from around the country who have come to help heal the lives of those who have been affected by this terrible disaster.

I told some folks back there that the world saw this tidal wave of disaster ascend upon the gulf coast, and now they're going to see a tidal wave of compassion. There's over 5,000 Red Cross—or nearly 5,000 Red Cross volunteers that are working long hours at shelters in 19 States to help these folks that have been displaced get their feet back on the ground.

I can't think of anything more encouraging for someone who has endured the tragedy of a storm than to have a loving soul say, "I'm here to help you. And I want you to know a lot of people care for you." And that's the spirit of the Red Cross and its volunteers.

If you want to help—help this country heal after the result of this disaster, please give cash money to the Red Cross. I just passed the place where volunteers and staffers are taking calls from around the country, and the response has been good, but there's more that needs to be done. Remember, it's the Red Cross that provides much of the first compassion that a person finds. It's the Red Cross that helps provide cash money for somebody, to help them transition from being disrupted—having their lives disrupted to a more normal life. It's the Red Cross that helps feed. And so the Red Cross needs money.

The Red Cross can use volunteers. People—this is a storm of enormous magnitude. A lot of people's lives have been affected. I know much of the country is focused on New Orleans, Louisiana, but parishes outside of New Orleans have been ruined. Up and down the coast of Mississippi, communities have been destroyed. And so we need more manpower. And if you want to help, please call the Red Cross, and—your local Red Cross, and they'll find a way for you to help.

And finally, the Red Cross is in need of blood, and there's a blood drive going on. As a matter of fact, the White House will be having a blood drive on Friday. And I will be encouraging the employees there to donate blood. And I hope others will do so as well.

This country is coming together to help people who hurt. And one of the leaders of the army of compassion is the Red Cross. And I'm grateful for your leadership, Marty. I want to thank all the good folks here who have—who really show the world the great compassion of our country. And thanks for letting me come by to say hello.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:43 a.m. In his remarks, he referred to Marsha J. "Marty" Evans, president and chief executive officer, American Red Cross.

Remarks Announcing the Nomination of John G. Roberts, Jr., To Be Chief Justice of the United States Supreme Court

September 5, 2005

Morning. This summer I announced the nomination of Judge John Roberts to be Associate Justice of the Supreme Court of the United States. I chose Judge Roberts from among the most distinguished jurists and attorneys in the country because he possesses the intellect, experience, and temperament to be an outstanding member of our Nation's highest court.

For the past 2 months, Members of the United States Senate and the American people have learned about the career and character of Judge Roberts. They like what they see. He's a gentleman. He's a man of integrity and fairness. And throughout his life, he has inspired the respect and loyalty of others. John Roberts has built a record of excellence and achievement, and a reputation for good will and decency toward others.

In his extraordinary career, Judge Roberts has argued 39 cases before the Nation's highest court. When I nominated him to the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia, he was confirmed by unanimous consent. Both those who've worked with him and those who have faced him in the courtroom speak with admiration of his striking ability as a lawyer and his natural gifts as a leader. Judge Roberts has earned the Nation's confidence, and I'm pleased to announce that I will nominate him to serve as the 17th Chief Justice of the Supreme Court.

The passing of Chief Justice William Rehnquist leaves the center chair empty just 4 weeks left before the Supreme Court reconvenes. It is in the interest of the Court and the country to have a Chief Justice on the bench on the first full day of the fall term. The Senate is well along in the process of considering Judge Roberts's qualifications. They know his record and his fidelity to the law. I'm confident that the Senate can complete hearings and confirm him as Chief Justice within a month. As a result of my decision to nominate Judge Roberts to be chief justice, I also have the responsibility to submit a new nominee to follow Justice Sandra Day O'Connor. I will do so in a timely manner.

Twenty-five years ago, John Roberts came to Washington as a clerk to Justice William Rehnquist. In his boss, the young law clerk found a role model, a professional mentor, and a friend for life. I'm certain that Chief Justice Rehnquist was hoping to welcome John Roberts as a colleague, and we're all sorry that day didn't come. Yet it's fitting that a great Chief Justice be followed in office by a person who shared his deep reverence for the Constitution, his profound respect for the Supreme Court, and his complete devotion to the cause of justice.

Congratulations.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8:01 a.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of Chief Justice-designate Roberts.

Remarks on Hurricane Katrina Recovery Efforts and an Exchange With Reporters in Baker, Louisiana
September 5, 2005

The President. Listen, Laura and I have come back down to Louisiana, and then we're going over to Mississippi to let the good people of this region know there's a lot of work to be done, and we're going to continue working with the local and State people to get it done.

The first mission, of course, is to save lives. And so long as any life is in danger, we've got work to do, and they're going to continue to save lives, whether it be in New Orleans or the surrounding parishes or up and down the coast of Mississippi.

Secondly, we can help save lives once a person finds a shelter such as this. That means getting people food and water and medicine and help and in a place like this, love.

I want to thank the pastor for having us. I want to thank my friend T.D. Jakes for rallying the armies of compassion to help somebody like the mayor.

The response of this country to—has been amazing. But T.D. tells me about church family members of his who have adopted 20 people of the—from New Orleans. The pastor here has got his gymnasiums full of families, and volunteers are now responding to help the families. I want to thank every family member who's helping somebody who has been displaced. I want to thank every church member who's helping people who are displaced—who have been displaced.

America can be proud of the efforts of the churches and synagogues and mosques and community organizations that are helping these people. And this is a long-term project, to help these people. And this country is going to be committed to doing what it takes to help people get back on their feet. And that's why I've come back to this State, and that's why I'm going to Mississippi.

Again, I want to thank the pastor. The response of this church is indicative of the response of many around this Nation, and I mean cities big and cities small, families with, you know, who have got a lot of money and families with little money, all opening their arms to a brother and sister in need.

And again, I want to thank you, pastor. Thank you, T.D., for helping to call people to action. I want to thank the mayor, thank the folks of Louisiana. We've got a lot of work to do, and that's why I'm here to tell people, we'll get it done.

Thank you all.

Q. [*Inaudible*]—does the Government have——

Ongoing Relief Efforts

The President. So long as anybody's life is in danger, we've got work to do. That's why I want people to be assured we're going to do it. And—but remember, this is a project that not only deals with the immediate; we're going to have to deal with the long term as well. The immediate needs are being taken care of right here, and I fully understand there's a lot of work to be done.

Q. [*Inaudible*]—the Federal Government doing the best it can now?

The President. I think all levels of Government are doing the best they can. If it's not going right, we'll make it right.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:30 a.m. in the evacuee shelter at the Bethany World Prayer Center. In his remarks, he referred to Larry Stockstill, senior pastor, Bethany World Prayer Center; Bishop Thomas D. Jakes, Sr., chief executive officer, The Potter's House of Dallas, Inc., Dallas, TX; and Mayor Melvin L. "Kip" Holden of Baton Rouge, LA.

Remarks at the Emergency Operations Center in Baton Rouge, Louisiana
September 5, 2005

First of all, thanks for doing your duty. You've faced one of the greatest challenges our country has ever faced. As a result of your compassion and your hard work and your dedication, a lot of people's lives were saved, and I want to thank you for that. I hope that makes you feel good, to know that you helped save life.

We've got a lot of work to do. I told the Governor and the Senators and the Congress people, I said, "You know, if it's not right, we're going to fix it, and if it is right, we're going to keep doing it." And this is just the beginning of a huge effort to—and we're going to continue to save life. But you've got to know that lives are still being saved as we speak because thousands of people are taking in these displaced souls, in their homes and churches and synagogues and mosques and providing love and compassion and food.

This is one of these disasters that will test our soul and test our spirit. And—but we're going to show the world, once again, that not only we will survive, but that we will be stronger and better for it when it's all said and done, that amidst this darkness, there is light. And I want to thank you all for providing light, immediate light to people who needed help. You make your State and your local governments and your country proud.

God bless you and your families. May God bless the victims, and may God continue to bless our country. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:05 p.m. In his remarks, he referred to Gov. Kathleen Babineaux Blanco of Louisiana.

Remarks to the Community in Poplarville, Mississippi
September 5, 2005

[*The President's remarks are joined in progress.*]

——out of this despair is going to come a vibrant coast. It's—again, I understand if you're saying to yourself, "Well, it's hard for me to realize what George W. is saying, because I've seen the rubble and I know what has happened to my neighbors." But I'd like to come back down here in about 2 years and walk your streets and see how vital this part of the world is going to be.

I can't wait to join you in the joy of welcoming neighbors back into neighborhoods, and small businesses up and running, and cutting those ribbons that somebody is creating new jobs. That's what I think is going to happen.

I just want you to know that when I'm thinking about how we can help this part of the world, Mississippi is on my mind. Mississippi is a part of the future of this country, and part of that future is to help you get back up on your feet. And I'm confident that your United States Senator Trent Lott, if I don't say it loud enough, he will. [*Laughter*] He'll remind us. But I appreciate you taking time out of your day.

And by the way, I'm traveling with good company. My wife, Laura, is with me too.

Let me conclude by asking for God's blessings on you all and your families and friends, and let you know we're here for the long term. I understand. I understand the damage. I understand the devastation.

I understand the destruction. I understand how long it's going to take. And we're with you. That's what I want you to know. God bless.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:12 p.m. at Pearl River Community College. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of these remarks.

Remarks Following a Cabinet Meeting and an Exchange With Reporters *September 6, 2005*

The President. Thank you all for coming. My message to the Cabinet this morning is this: This administration is not going to rest until every life can be saved, until families are reconnected, until this recovery is complete. Our goals—our immediate goals are these: We want to complete the search-and-recovery; we want to restore essential services; we want to drain the water in the affected areas and begin removing debris; we want to—and are assessing public health and safety matters.

I've asked the Vice President to go down to the affected region on Thursday. He will go down to assess our recovery efforts. He will help me determine whether or not we're meeting these goals. He'll work with Secretary Chertoff and others to make sure that we remove any obstacles, bureaucratic obstacles that may be preventing us from achieving our goals. In other words, bureaucracy is not going to stand in the way of getting the job done for the people.

I was briefed on plans to immediately help our folks, plans to reconnect families, plans to make sure health care is available. And Secretary Leavitt gave me a good brief—plans on housing, both immediate and long-term housing. Most importantly, I was briefed by members of my Cabinet about how we're going to make sure that people who are owed a Social Security check, get their Social Security check. At the center in Baton Rouge I went to yesterday, I remember clearly a person saying, "When am I going to get my Social Security check?" And it's important to note, people understand we have a strategy to make sure the benefits that are due are going to get to them.

Now, we understand people are scattered out across the country, but we have an obligation to make sure that whether a veteran's benefit or an unemployment benefit or a Social Security benefit gets to these people. And so we have a strategy in place, and we're going to implement that strategy—to find people who are in those shelters or in churches or in private homes—and get them the benefit.

A lot of people are doing good work. We've got a heck of a lot more work to do, and that's exactly what this Government is going to do.

Hurricane Katrina Recovery Efforts

Q. Mr. President.

The President. Yes, Bob [Bob Franken, Cable News Network].

Q. Do you intend to replace any from your administration who are leading this recovery effort, who were part of the effort last week that has been so widely criticized?

The President. What I intend to do is lead a—to lead an investigation to find out what went right and what went wrong. And I'll tell you why. It's very important for us to understand the relationship between the Federal Government, the State government, and the local government when it comes to a major catastrophe. And the reason it's important is, is that we still live in an unsettled world. We want to make sure that we can respond properly if there's a WMD attack or another major storm.

And so I'm going to find out, over time, what went right and what went wrong.

Q. Sir.

The President. Yes, Jennifer [Jennifer Loven, Associated Press].

Q. Secretary Chertoff has talked about being disturbed at the information—or lack of information to the State from the region. Just from what you know initially, do you think that more went wrong at the local or State level or the Federal level? And do you think there should be a commission to sort it out?

The President. I think one of the things that people want us to do here is to play a blame game. We've got to solve problems. We're problem-solvers. There will be ample time for people to figure out what went right and what went wrong. What I'm interested in is helping save lives. That's what I want to do. And I want to make sure those poor folks who have been taken out of their communities and who live in a—whose world has been shattered, get the help they need. And then we want to help New Orleans rebuild, and we want to see Biloxi rise again.

And, you know, I was with the mayor of Waveland the other day, from Mississippi. His town was completely destroyed. What I'm interested in is helping that man and that community get back on their feet. That's where my focus is. There will be ample time to assess—and we need to assess. And this administration will be part of the assessment as to what went wrong, because, I repeat, we've got to have as good a relationship as possible with all levels of government to be able to respond to major problems. And if things went wrong, we'll correct them. And when things went right, we'll duplicate them.

Patsy [Patricia Wilson, Reuters].

Upcoming Supreme Court Nomination

Q. Mr. President, on the Supreme Court, do you have a candidate in mind? And now that you have a second opportunity, are you more inclined to follow the First Lady's advice and choose a woman?

The President. First of all, I'm proud of my nominee to be the Chief. And the goal is to get this good person confirmed by the time the Court convenes this fall. See, they're going to need their Chief. And, therefore, the Senate needs to have a—obviously, a thorough debate about Judge Roberts and get him confirmed quickly so that when the Court convenes, there is a Chief Justice. And I was deliberate in my process last time. I'll be deliberative this time. I obviously interviewed a lot of good candidates last time. I still will continue to reach out and make sure every good candidate is considered.

Q. Are the same ones on the list, sir? Some of the same ones that you interviewed last time, are they——

The President. The list is wide open, which should create some good speculation here in Washington. [*Laughter*] And make sure you notice, when I said that, I looked right at Al Gonzales, who can really create speculation. [*Laughter*]

Assistant Press Secretary Josh Deckard. Thank you all.

The President. I'm not through yet. But this is important for people to understand: I want the Senate to focus not on who the next nominee is going to be, but the nominee I've got up there now. And it's important for the country that they complete the work. And in the meantime, the country can be assured that I'll take a good, long look at who should replace Justice O'Connor. I called her from Air Force One yesterday and told her of my decision to name John Roberts to be the Chief. And her first reaction was that she better get back to doing her homework, and she said so somewhat tongue-in-cheek, but she's right, she'll be there when the Court is seated with a new Chief Justice. And then we'll move deliberately to replace Justice O'Connor.

Thank you all for coming.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:08 a.m. in the Cabinet Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Chief Justice-designate John G. Roberts, Jr.; and Mayor Tommy Longo of Waveland, MS. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of these remarks.

Remarks Following a Meeting With National Voluntary Organizations Representatives
September 6, 2005

Hurricane Katrina Recovery Efforts

Listen, I want to thank leaders of the—in the faith—faith-based and community-based community for being here. We've got people who represent thousands of volunteers who are in the midst of helping save lives.

You know, there's a debate here about refugees. Let me tell you my attitude and the attitude of people around this table. The people we're talking about are not refugees; they are Americans. And they need the help and love and compassion of our fellow citizens. And the people at this table are providing that help and compassion and love.

If you want to help, support the Red Cross or the Salvation Army or your church or the United Way. Houston, for example, is going to kick off a United Way campaign, and that money is going to help with the costs of the displaced persons inside of Houston. So please give cash money to organizations that are directly involved in helping save lives—save the lives that have been affected by Hurricane Katrina.

We have spent time talking about how we can make sure we continue progress, make sure people get—not only continue to get the affection and love of people in the private sector, but also to make sure that the Government gets people their Social Security checks or their veterans benefits checks, the checks that—unemployment checks. And we'll do that. We'll do that.

Out of the darkness will come some light, and the light I saw yesterday at the program in Baton Rouge with T.D. Jakes was so apparent to me. And it's based upon the fact that we've got citizens who are willing to take time to love somebody like they would like to be loved themselves, welcome a stranger in their midst. And for those of you who have done that, I thank you from the bottom of my heart. You're a part of the strength of this country. You're what makes America a great place.

In the meantime, we'll continue to work together to do our duty and to help our citizens who hurt and help this great part of the country rebuild.

God bless.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:02 p.m. in the Roosevelt Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Bishop Thomas D. Jakes, Sr., chief executive officer, The Potter's House of Dallas, Inc., Dallas, TX.

Remarks on Efforts To Assist Students and School Districts Displaced by Hurricane Katrina

September 6, 2005

The President. Laura and I just had a good visit with Secretary of Education Spellings and her team about the—about the school children who have been displaced because of Hurricane Katrina. You know, this is a time when a lot of families are looking forward to sending their child back to school, and their children are excited about school. But a lot of those dreams and a lot of that excitement has been upset for a lot of students because of the storm.

Yesterday we went to a shelter in Baton Rouge and met a lot of little kids, many of whom are starting school in Baton Rouge. And it's indicative of what's taking place across the country. A lot of school districts are taking in these children who have had to leave their homes and their local districts. And we want to thank the schools and the school districts and the teachers and the PTAs for reaching out and doing their duty.

We spent time talking about how to help States absorb the costs. And Margaret is working on a plan that we'll announce to the country after a while. The other thing that—and by the way, they're going to set up a web page tomorrow that will enable people from around the country to be able to access the Department of Education web page to determine how they can help these school districts that are bringing in the new students.

As well, yesterday, when Laura and I were in Mississippi, I ran into a young pharmacy student that had been going to Xavier in New Orleans. And Xavier is one of our great universities, and she was so excited about going to school and had to come back home because of the hurricane. And she was concerned and worried.

One of the things that people can be assured of is that, one, we're reaching out to other universities to encourage them to accept students, and many are. And we will—there will be loan forbearance and loan extensions. In other words, the Department of Education will help those who have—are dependent upon student loans, will help them be able to finance their education, will help them—if they're not going to go back to school—and we hope they do, but if they choose not to, there will be a loan forbearance. In other words, this Education Department of ours is going to be flexible.

I'm confident that this Government of ours will be able to help the local school districts, and I'm confident that the local school districts will still want to maintain a high standard of excellence and make sure every child learns to read and write and add and subtract.

Laura is going down to DeSoto County, Mississippi, to comfort the folks there and to let them know the Federal Government is aware of the problems when it comes to education and that we will step up and assume our responsibility to make sure every single child in this country gets a good education.

And again, I want to thank the local school districts all around the country who are making extraordinary efforts to make sure that the children who have been upset by this hurricane are able to find some comfort and some solace in the midst of their anguish by being able to go to a school.

Thank you all.

Q. Can you take a question on energy, sir?

Q. When is the First Lady going, sir?

The President. Thursday.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:04 p.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of these remarks.

Remarks at the Funeral Service for Chief Justice of the United States William H. Rehnquist
September 7, 2005

Jim and Janet and Nancy; members of the Rehnquist family; colleagues of the Chief Justice:

This afternoon the people of the United States mourn the passing of the leader of a branch of the Government, the eight Justices of the Court pay final homage to their Chief and friend, and a loving family bids farewell to a kind and gentle soul.

William Hubbs Rehnquist accomplished many things in his good life and rose to high places. And we remember the integrity and the sense of duty that he brought to every task before him. That character was clear in the young man of 18 who signed up for the Army Air Corps during the Second World War. The Nation saw that character in his more than three decades of service on our highest Court. And the Nation saw it again last January the 20th, when the Chief Justice made his way onto the Inaugural platform. Many will never forget the sight of this man, weakened by illness, rise to his full height and say in a strong voice, "Raise your right hand, Mr. President, and repeat after me."

It was more than a half-century ago that Bill Rehnquist first came to the Supreme Court as a law clerk. As he would later recount the story, he made that trip from Milwaukee in the middle of the winter in an old blue Studebaker with no heater. He recalled that as he began the journey, he patted that car and thought, "Don't let me down, baby."

After a year-and-a-half in the Chambers of Justice Robert Jackson, Bill Rehnquist left DC and headed for Phoenix with an even greater love for the law and with something more, a beautiful fiancee named Natalie Cornell. She would share his walk in life for nearly 40 years. All who knew the Chief know how he cherished Nan and their time together and how much he missed his wife in the years without her.

In every chapter of his life, William Rehnquist stood apart for his powerful intellect and clear convictions. In a profession that values disciplined thought and persuasive ability, a talent like his gets noticed in a hurry. Still in his forties, he became the 100th Justice of the Supreme Court, and one of the youngest in modern times.

After he moved to the center chair, William Rehnquist led the Court for nearly two decades and earned a place among our greatest chief justices. He built consensus through openness and collegiality. He was a distinguished scholar of the Constitution and a superb administrator of the judicial conference. He understood the role of a judge and the place of courts in our constitutional system. He was prudent in exercising judicial power and firm in defending judicial independence.

On the bench and as a leader of the Federal courts, Chief Justice Rehnquist was always a calm and steady presence. In his thinking and in his bearing, he personified the ideal of fairness, and people could sense it. Inside the Court, no man could have been a finer steward of the institution, its customs, and its history.

As long as William Rehnquist was presiding, colleagues and advocates knew that the proceedings would be orderly, on time, businesslike, and occasionally humorous. Once during an oral argument, a lawyer

criticized his opponent's position by saying, "I doubt very much it will fool this Court." The Chief Justice replied, "Don't overestimate us." [*Laughter*]

In his time on the Court, William Rehnquist served with 16 other justices, and by all accounts, each one of his colleagues regarded the man with respect and affection. Justice William Brennen once said to a visitor, "I cannot begin to tell you . . . how fond all of us are of him personally."

Throughout this city of government, people saw William Rehnquist in that same way. He carried himself with dignity but without pretense. Like Ronald Reagan, the President who elevated him to Chief Justice, he was kindly and decent, and there was not an ounce of self-importance about him. It is rare that—it is a rare man who can hold a prominent position in Washington, DC, for more than 30 years and leave behind only good feelings and admiration. That's what William Rehnquist did.

His law clerks knew him as a demanding boss who pressed them, as one said, to "read carefully, write clearly, and to think hard." But the clerks also became an extension of the Chief's family, joining him for walks around the Capitol, or for lunch or dinner, or games of tennis or charades. His clerks remember those times with fondness. And even more, they remember his vast store of knowledge and his daily example of clear thinking and character. To work beside William Rehnquist was to learn how a wise man looks at the law and how a good man looks at life.

The Chief Justice was devoted to his public duties but not consumed by them. He was a renaissance man, a man who adored his family, a man who always kept things in balance. He read works of history and wrote a few fine ones of his own. He knew how to paint, and he knew how to win at bridge and poker. He had a passion for the classics, for astronomy, and for college basketball. He enjoyed music, and having stood next to him during the national anthem, I can tell you the man loved to sing. [*Laughter*]

William Rehnquist often reminded young lawyers of the ancient insight that time is the most valuable thing a man can spend. He spoke with feeling about the need to choose wisely, doing your job well, and never forgetting the other important things that also take time: love for one another, being a good parent to a child, service to your community. He might have added, the importance of being a loving grandfather, because he was clearly that too.

The 16th Chief Justice of the United States was given 80 years of life. He filled those years with purpose, a gracious spirit, and faithful service to God and country to the very end. He now goes to his rest beside his beloved Nan. And William H. Rehnquist leaves behind the gratitude of our whole Nation. We're proud of our Chief Justice, and America honors his memory. May God bless him.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:45 p.m. at St. Matthew's Cathedral. In his remarks, he referred to James Rehnquist, Janet Rehnquist, and Nancy Spears, children of Chief Justice William H. Rehnquist. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks. The related proclamation of September 4 on the death of Chief Justice Rehnquist is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

Letter to the Speaker of the House of Representatives Requesting Additional Appropriations for Response and Recovery Efforts in Areas Struck by Hurricane Katrina
September 7, 2005

Dear Mr. Speaker:

On September 2nd, I signed into law Public Law 109–61, the "Emergency Supplemental Appropriations Act to Meet Immediate Needs Arising From the Consequences of Hurricane Katrina, 2005," which provided $10.5 billion in emergency supplemental funds for hurricane-related disaster relief.

Due to the catastrophic nature of Hurricane Katrina, I am asking the Congress to consider the enclosed request, for an additional $51.8 billion, for emergency FY 2005 supplemental resources for the Departments of Defense and Homeland Security and the Army Corps of Engineers.

I hereby designate this proposal in the amount requested herein as an emergency requirement. This request responds to urgent needs associated with immediate response and recovery efforts associated with Hurricane Katrina in Alabama, Louisiana, Mississippi, and other affected areas.

I urge the Congress to act expeditiously on this request to ensure that the Federal response to this disaster continues uninterrupted. I anticipate making a further request that will provide for additional response and recovery efforts after further assessing the impact of the hurricane.

The details of this request are set forth in the enclosed letter from the Director of the Office of Management and Budget.

Sincerely,

GEORGE W. BUSH

Remarks on Hurricane Katrina Recovery Efforts
September 8, 2005

I want to thank the members of my Cabinet who have joined me today. Today I'm going to take this opportunity to speak directly to our citizens who have been displaced by Hurricane Katrina.

Many of you have been evacuated from the flooded and destroyed areas and now find yourselves far from home, without proper identification or even a change of clothes. So today I'm announcing two important steps that we are taking to provide you the help you need, steps that will cut through the redtape so that we get that help into your hands as quickly and easily as possible.

The first step is providing every household with $2,000 in emergency disaster relief that can be used for immediate needs such as food or clothing or personal essentials. For those of you who are living in the large shelters, such as the Houston Astrodome, I know that you don't have cars or transportation and cannot get yourself to the centers to collect these funds. I also know that some of you do not have access to a savings or checking account or ways to cash a check. FEMA and Red Cross teams are either—are working or soon will be working with your shelters to meet your challenges and to get assistance into your hands as soon as possible. By registering for the first $2,000, you will begin the process of arranging for the delivery of other, longer term assistance that will be made available in the coming weeks for eligible

households. For those of you who are staying with family members or in a rented room or a hotel or apartment, FEMA is also working to get these funds in your hands.

Now, here are two ways that you can register for this assistance. You can call 1–800–621–FEMA. That's 1–800–621–FEMA. Or, if you have the capability to use the Internet, you can log on to www.fema.gov. A FEMA representative will arrange for your assistance to be delivered by mail or deposited into your bank account. If you have special needs, the FEMA representative can help arrange to get the money to you in another way.

Now, we have 3,000 people who are working around the clock to take the calls. We're in the process of training more, and that number will be increasing dramatically. More than 400,000 families have already been registered. We still have tens of thousands more people who need to be processed, so I ask for your patience if you experience problems in trying to contact FEMA.

To those of you in our faith-based and community groups who have opened up your hearts and homes, I want to thank you for your service to our fellow Americans. If you've not been in contact with a FEMA representative, please do so to help the people in your shelters. And, again, you can call 1–800–621–FEMA. By calling a FEMA representative, you can assure that the people you've taken in are registered and able to receive the emergency assistance funds.

As we work to deliver this emergency relief, we're also working to ensure that those of you who have received Federal benefits administered by the States of Alabama, Mississippi, and Louisiana will continue to get those benefits in the States where you're now staying.

So the second step we're taking today is designed to make it easier for you to register and collect these benefits in any State in the country. We will start by granting evacuee status for all of you who have lived in counties that have been declared disaster areas. We know that many of you no longer have the legal documents or the records to prove your eligibility for the benefits you've been getting. We understand that. And so, with this evacuee status, you will be able to register for your benefits without many of the traditional administrative requirements for verification and enrollment.

The special evacuee status applies to the full range of Federal benefits administered by the States. These programs include: Medicaid; temporary assistance for needy families; child care; mental health services and substance abuse treatment; food stamps; housing; foster care; women, infants, and children nutrition; school lunch; unemployment compensation; and job training.

The States that have opened up their doors should not be penalized for coming to the aid of Americans in distress. And so I'm going to work with the Congress to reimburse the States that are taking in evacuees from the affected areas along the gulf coast.

I want to thank the Governors and the leaders of the States that have taken in so many of our fellow citizens. I want to thank you for your compassion. And we understand that this is going to strain your budgets, so the Federal Government, as I just said, will operate under this principle: You should not be penalized for showing compassion. State enrollment teams are already set up in many shelters, and many have 1–800 numbers that people can call. Any evacuee can contact the nearest State or local benefits office to get the information about enrolling.

And those of you who are staying in a home or church that has access to the Internet can find out how to receive these benefits by going to www.govbenefits.gov. These are just some of the many steps we'll be taking in what will be a long relief effort. We have much more work to do. But

the people who have been hurt by this storm know that—need to know that the Government is going to be with you for the long haul.

In all the steps we take, our goal is not to simply provide benefits but to make them easy and simple as possible to collect. The responsibility of caring for hundreds of thousands of citizens who no longer have homes is going to place many demands on our Nation. We have many difficult days ahead, especially as we recover those who did not survive the storm. I've instructed all agencies to honor their memory by treating the dead with the dignity and respect they deserve.

Throughout our history, in times of testing, Americans have come together in prayer to heal and ask for strength for the tasks ahead. So I've declared Friday, September the 16th, as a National Day of Prayer and Remembrance. I ask that we pray, as Americans have always prayed in times of trial, with confidence in His purpose, with hope for a brighter future, and with the humility to ask God to keep us strong so that we can better serve our brothers and sisters in need.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:25 p.m. in Room 350 of the Dwight D. Eisenhower Executive Office Building. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of these remarks. The National Day of Prayer and Remembrance proclamation of September 8 is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

Statement on Congressional Action on Emergency Funding for Hurricane Katrina Recovery Efforts

September 8, 2005

I thank Congress for continuing to help those affected by Hurricane Katrina by moving swiftly and in strong bipartisan fashion to approve these additional emergency funds. The people affected by this storm have immediate needs that we must continue to meet without delay. More resources will be needed as we work to help people get back on their feet. We will continue to help people rebuild their lives and rebuild the region.

Message to the Congress on the National Emergency Caused by Hurricane Katrina

September 8, 2005

To the Congress of the United States:

I hereby report that I have exercised my statutory authority under section 6 of the Davis-Bacon Act, 40 U.S.C. 276a–5, to suspend the provisions of sections 276a to 276a–5 of the Davis-Bacon Act in the event of a national emergency. I have found that the conditions caused by Hurricane Katrina constitute a "national emergency" within the meaning of section 6. I have, therefore, suspended the provisions of the Davis-Bacon Act in designated areas in the States of Alabama, Florida, Louisiana, and Mississippi.

This action is more fully set out in the enclosed proclamation that I have issued today.

GEORGE W. BUSH

The White House,

September 8, 2005.

NOTE: The proclamation of September 8 regarding the designated areas affected by Hurricane Katrina is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

Message to the Congress on Continuation of the National Emergency With Respect to Certain Terrorist Attacks
September 8, 2005

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. Consistent with this provision, I have sent to the *Federal Register* the enclosed notice, stating that the emergency declared with respect to the terrorist attacks on the United States of September 11, 2001, is to continue in effect for an additional year.

The terrorist threat that led to the declaration on September 14, 2001, of a national emergency continues. For this reason, I have determined that it is necessary to continue in effect after September 14, 2005, the national emergency with respect to the terrorist threat.

GEORGE W. BUSH

The White House,

September 8, 2005.

NOTE: The notice is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

Remarks at the Swearing-In Ceremony for Karen P. Hughes as Under Secretary of State for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs
September 9, 2005

The President. Thank you. Madame Secretary, thank you. Thank you for the fine leadership you're providing for our country. Laura and I are pleased to be back here at the State Department, and we're really pleased to be here to honor our new Under Secretary for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs, Ambassador Karen Hughes.

It's good to see many of Karen's friends here today, particularly those from Texas. Welcome. I want to say something about her family, her husband, Jerry, and Robert and Leigh and Lauren. I want to thank you very much for supporting Karen. It is a real blessing for this country that she has decided to come back and serve. And I know she would not have done that without your support, so thank you all very much.

We're in a war on terror. We are still at war. And to succeed in this war, we must effectively explain our policies and

fundamental values to people around the world. This is an incredibly important mission, and so I've asked one of America's most talented communicators to take it on.

Karen Hughes has been one of my closest and most trusted advisers for more than a decade. She understands the miracle of America. She understands what we stand for. After all, she's lived it. Her grandfather was a Pennsylvania coal miner. She's a working mom who rose to serve at the highest levels of our Government. She has a compassionate heart, a brilliant mind, and a deep love for America. I can think of no one better to share the American experience with the world than Karen Hughes.

I want to thank the Cabinet Secretaries who are here. I appreciate you taking time out of your day to come and honor our friend. Don't hesitate to get back to work. We've got a lot to do. [*Laughter*] I appreciate General Dick Myers, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs, who's with us. I want to thank John Negroponte, who is joining us as well. And thank you all.

America is a strong and resilient nation. Our people have the spirit, the resources, and the determination to overcome any challenge. And today, this Nation faces enormous challenges at home and abroad.

At this moment, our fellow citizens along the gulf coast are struggling to recover from one of the worst natural disasters in our country's history. Many thousands have lost their homes. They've lost their loved ones. They've lost all their earthly possessions. The disaster area is larger than the size of Great Britain. Towns and communities have been flattened. One of our great cities has been submerged.

In this time of struggle, the American people need to know we're not struggling alone. I want to thank the members of the diplomatic corps who are with us today. I want to thank the world community for its prayers and for the offers of assistance that have come from all around the world. The outpouring of compassion and support has been substantial.

Think of this: Afghanistan has pledged $100,000 to aid—in aid to the victims of Hurricane Katrina. Mr. Ambassador, thank you. Canada has sent ships with disaster supplies. Air Canada—Air Canada's planes assisted in the evacuation. Israel sent tents and mineral water and medical supplies. Italy has sent beds and sheets and blankets and inflatable rafts to help with rescue efforts. Kuwait has pledged $400 million in oil and $100 million in humanitarian aid. Qatar and the UAE has pledged $100 million each. Sri Lanka, one of the world's most impoverished nations that is struggling to overcome the effects of the tsunami, has sent a donation of $25,000.

In all, more than a hundred countries have stepped forward with offers of assistance, and additional pledges of support are coming in every day. To every nation in every province and every local community across the globe that is standing with the American people and with those who hurt on the gulf coast, our entire Nation thanks you for your support.

Four years ago, the American people saw a similar outpouring of sympathy and support when another tragedy struck our Nation, the terrorist attacks of September the 11th, 2001. This Sunday, Americans will mark the fourth anniversary of that terrible day when nearly 3,000 innocent people were murdered. The attacks took place on American soil, yet they left grieving families on virtually every continent. Citizens from dozens of nations were killed on September the 11th, innocent men and women and children of every race and every religion.

And in the 4 years since the September the 11th attacks, the terrorists have continued to kill in Madrid and Istanbul and Jakarta and Casablanca, in Riyadh, in Bali, in Baghdad, in London, in Sharm el-Sheikh, and elsewhere.

In the war on terror, the world's civilized nations face a common enemy, an enemy that hates us because of the values we hold in common. The terrorists have a strategy. They want to force those of us who love

freedom to retreat, to pull back so they can topple governments in the Middle East and turn that region into a safe haven for terrorism.

To achieve these aims, they kill the innocent, because they believe that all human life is expendable. And that stands in stark contrast to what we believe. We believe human life is a precious gift from our Creator. Every nation that shares this belief shares the belief in human rights and human dignity, shares a stake in the outcome of this struggle. Every nation that believes that human rights and human dignity applies to every man, woman, and child, shares a responsibility in ensuring our victory over the terrorists.

We're on a hunt for the terrorists. We are striking them in foreign lands before they can hurt our citizens again. Yet we know that this war will not be won by force of arms alone. We must defeat the terrorists on the battlefield, and we must also defeat them in the battle of ideas.

As Prime Minister Blair said after the London attacks, we must not fight just the terrorists' methods, but also their views; not just their barbaric acts, but also their barbaric ideas. In the long run, the only way to achieve lasting peace is to offer a hopeful alternative to the terrorist ideology of hatred and fear.

By spreading the hope of freedom across the broader Middle East, Condi and Karen—or should I say, Madam Secretary and the Ambassador—understand that spreading the message of freedom requires an aggressive effort to share and communicate America's fundamental values.

And so they have an ambitious agenda to carry out. First, I've asked them to marshal all the resources of the Federal Government to this critical mission. Public diplomacy is the job of every member of my administration. As the Under Secretary for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs, Karen will direct the State Department's efforts to communicate with the world, and at the same time, she will coordinate the work of our administration in support of this vital mission, ensuring that every agency and department gives public diplomacy the same level of priority that I do.

Second, I've asked the State Department to enlist the support of the private sector in our Nation's public diplomacy efforts. The experienced diplomats in this room will be the first to tell you, the American people are some of our Nation's best ambassadors. We must find ways to utilize their talents and skills more effectively. Everyone who travels abroad or welcomes an exchange student into their home is an ambassador for America. And we need more of our citizens involved in our public diplomacy.

Third, I've asked the State Department to improve our Government's capabilities to confront terrorist propaganda quickly, before myths have time to take root in the hearts and minds of people across the world. Listen, our enemies use lies. They use lies to recruit and train and indoctrinate. So Karen and her team have a vital task. They must ensure that the terrorist lies are challenged aggressively and that our Government is prepared to respond to false accusations and propaganda immediately.

Finally, I've asked the State Department to encourage Americans to learn about the languages and cultures of the broader Middle East. In the early days of the cold war, our Government undertook an intensive effort to encourage young Americans to study Russian language and history and culture so we could better understand the aspirations of the Russian people and the psychology of those who oppressed them. I've got to tell you, it's impressive to be with Condi when you're with the Russian officials, to hear her speak the Russian language. She was a part of that initiative. Today, the struggle for freedom has shifted to a new region of the world, and we need a similar effort to educate our people about the broader Middle East.

We must encourage young scholars to study the great history and traditions of the region. We need skilled linguists who

can communicate with their people so we can engage in a fruitful dialog about what it means to live in liberty.

We've living in dangerous and challenging times, yet this is also a moment of great hope and opportunity. Across the world, hearts and minds are opening to the message of human liberty as never before. In the last 2 years alone, tens of millions have voted for the first time in Afghanistan, Iraq, Lebanon, Kyrgyzstan, Ukraine, and Georgia. And as they claim their freedom, they are inspiring millions more across the broader Middle East. We must encourage their aspirations. We must nurture freedom's progress.

Karen will deliver the message of freedom with humility and compassion and determination. She knows that freedom is not America's gift to the world. She knows that freedom is the Almighty God's gift to every man, woman, and child in this world. She will help America seize this moment of opportunity by working with other nations and peoples to replace tyranny with tolerance and overcome hatred with hope. Together, we're going to help millions achieve the non-negotiable demands of human dignity, so they can build a better life for their children, and so we can lay the foundation of peace for our children and grandchildren.

Karen, good luck in your task. May God bless you.

[*At this point, Under Secretary Hughes was sworn into office.*]

The President. Good luck.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:17 a.m. in the Benjamin Franklin Room at the State Department. In his remarks, he referred to Afghanistan's Ambassador to the U.S. Said Tayeb Jawad; and Prime Minister Tony Blair of the United Kingdom. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of Under Secretary Hughes and Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice, who introduced the President.

Remarks at the 9/11 Heroes Medal of Valor Award Ceremony
September 9, 2005

Thank you all very much. Thank you. Welcome to the White House. Laura and I are honored that you're here today. We recognize a group of Americans whose bravery and commitment to their fellow citizens showed us the true meaning of heroism.

The 442 names you just heard belong to men and women of uncommon valor and decency and honor. On one of the worst days our country has ever witnessed, we witnessed the courage of some of the finest people our country has ever produced. And their sacrifice will always be remembered.

I want to thank the Attorney General. I welcome Members of the United States Congress and the United States Senate who have joined us, Bill Frist, Senator Schumer, Congressman Fossella, Congressman Crowley—by the way, thank you for bringing your mother—Congressman Wolf, Congressman Smith, Congressman King, Congressman McCarthy, Congressman Israel.

I want to thank Ray Kelly, the police commissioner for the great city of New York. I thank all the fire chiefs, police chiefs, Port Authority personnel. I particularly want to thank the men and women who are on the frontline of making us safe. Thank you all for coming today.

The 9/11 Heroes Medal of Valor honors the public safety officers who gave their lives on September the 11th. On that day,

firefighters, police officers, emergency medical technicians, Port Authority personnel, and other public safety officers performed their jobs with extraordinary distinction in the face of unspeakable terror.

We're grateful to the families and friends who have come here to honor their memory. We know that the sense of loss you feel does not disappear with time. Four years later, you still miss your loved ones. America admires your courage in the face of such terrible pain. And your loved ones will always have the thanks and admiration and respect of a grateful nation.

When America has been challenged, there has always been citizens willing to step forward and risk their lives for the rest of us. Over the last 11 days in Louisiana and Mississippi and Alabama, we have again seen acts of great compassion and extraordinary bravery from America's first-responders. Firefighters and police, and U.S. Coast Guard men and women, and National Guardsmen and active duty forces, disaster and medical assistance teams, search and rescue units from all over the United States have descended on the gulf coast to help the victims of Hurricane Katrina. They have faced the storm's destruction with valor and determination, and their hard work has saved lives in the face of great adversity.

We're still at the beginning of a huge effort. The tasks before us are enormous. Yet so is the heart of the United States. We're grateful to the emergency personnel who are working to assist victims and restore communities affected by this disaster. In these difficult days, we have again seen the great strength and character and resolve of America. And we will continue to work to help the people who are struggling.

In every community, we depend on those who carry the badge, who keep the peace and protect our citizens. And in times of national crisis, all Americans are grateful to those who answer the alarms and run toward danger and provide urgent care. Those who place their own lives at risk for others must be recognized and honored by their fellow citizens.

And 4 years ago, America saw the unparalleled heroism of our Nation's public safety officers. We lost brave rescue workers who gave their lives so that others could live. We lost many other citizens who assisted in the rescue efforts and whose courage and sacrifice that day made them extraordinary.

On September the 11th, 2001, America lost Firefighter Donny Regan of Rescue Company 3 in Bronx. During his 17-year career with the New York City Fire Department, he was cited six times for bravery. And today our Nation honors Donny's final act of courage. His son, Peter, lost a father on September the 11th; today, he carries on his father's legacy. Peter followed his dad's footsteps to the fire department. Today, he is defending our freedom as a Reservist with the 3d Battalion, 25th Marine Regiment in Iraq.

On September the 11th, 2001, America lost Firefighter Ronnie Gies of Squad 288 in Queens. Ronnie had been with the New York Fire Department since 1988. He rushed downtown to the World Trade Center. A video of the day showed Ronnie on his way into the towers. His wife says, "You see him straight on, carrying equipment with such a look of determination." His own son, Tommy, graduated from the FDNY Academy last August and is now a member of Ladder 147 in Brooklyn. And we're grateful for Tommy's courage and service.

On September the 11th, 2001, America lost Senior Court Officer Thomas Jurgens, one of about 25 New York State Court officers who responded after the plane hit the first tower. Thomas's last radio transmission came from inside the burning tower, after he'd been warned to get out because the danger was too great. He refused to leave his post. His last words before signing off were, "There are people here who need our help."

On September the 11th, 2001, America lost New York City Police Officer Moira Smith. Moira is remembered by friends for her fearless spirit on and off the job. She ran with the bulls in Spain. And in 1991, she ran into a subway tunnel to rescue dozens of people trapped in one of the worst subway accidents in New York history. On September the 11th, 2001, she ran toward danger once again, into the burning towers of the World Trade Center. A broker she helped to safety remembers her steady blue eyes and her even voice. The next day's papers carried an image of Moira helping an injured man out of the tower, before she rushed back in to save others. And the tower collapsed around her. One of Moira's colleagues said, "She could have saved herself, but nothing would have stopped her saving one more person."

These are some of the examples, only a few of the examples, of the extraordinary bravery that took place that day. All the brave men and women we recognize today brought credit to the uniform and honor to the United States of America.

And one way our Nation can honor their sacrifice is to win the war on terror. On September the 11th, 2001, we saw the future that terrorists intend for us. And I made a decision. America will not wait to be attacked again. We will take the fight to the enemy, and we'll defend our freedom.

And since that day we've taken the fight to the enemy. We're hunting down the terrorists in mountains in Afghanistan, in tribal regions of Pakistan, in the deserts of Iraq, and on islands of Southeast Asia, and the Horn of Africa. We're fighting the terrorists, and we're fighting their murderous ideology by spreading the hope of freedom across the broader Middle East. Free nations are peaceful nations, and by advancing freedom's cause, we are laying the foundation of peace for our children and our grandchildren.

We will succeed. And the legacy of peace and freedom we leave behind will be the greatest memorial to your fallen family members and friends.

The heroes of September the 11th will not be here to see that day. But their moms and dads and children and grandchildren can know, a proud America will always stand in the long shadow of their service and sacrifice, and a proud nation will always remember them.

May God bless you all, and may God forever bless the memories of those who sacrificed on behalf of our citizens.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1 p.m. in the Rose Garden at the White House.

The President's Radio Address
September 10, 2005

Good morning. On Sunday, our Nation will observe the fourth anniversary of the September the 11th terrorist attacks. Every American has memories of that day that will never leave them. We remember the images of fire and terror at the Pentagon, in Pennsylvania, and in the heart of New York City.

We remember the ruthlessness of those who murdered the innocent and took joy in their suffering. We remember the courage of the police and firefighters and rescue personnel who rushed into burning buildings to save lives, knowing they might never emerge. And we remember the victims, moms and dads, sons and daughters, brothers and sisters, husbands and wives, and the loved ones they left behind.

As night fell on America on September the 11th, 2001, we felt grief and great

sorrow. Yet we also saw that while the terrorists could kill the innocent, they could not defeat the spirit of our Nation. The despair and tragedy of that day were overcome by displays of selflessness, courage, and compassion.

And in the days and weeks that followed, America answered history's call to bring justice to our enemies and to ensure the survival and success of liberty. And that mission continues today.

Four years later, Americans remember the fears and uncertainty and confusion of that terrible morning. But above all, we remember the resolve of our Nation to defend our freedom, rebuild a wounded city, and care for our neighbors in need.

Today, America is confronting another disaster that has caused destruction and loss of life. This time the devastation resulted not from the malice of evil men but from the fury of water and wind.

Hurricane Katrina flattened entire towns along our gulf coast and left one of America's most storied cities under water. Tens of thousands have lost homes and loved ones and all their earthly possessions. The storm took countless lives and forced hundreds of thousands of people to flee from their communities, with no assurance of returning soon.

Once more, our hearts ache for our fellow citizens, and many are left with questions about the future. Yet we are again being reminded that adversity brings out the best in the American spirit. In this time of great suffering, we have seen the courage and determination of rescue personnel who willingly risk their lives to save the lives of others. We have seen the spirit of America's armies of compassion who have rallied in response to this tragedy. Faith-based organizations and community groups and individual citizens across the country are caring for those affected by the storm and comforting those whose loved ones are lost or missing. Across our country, Americans are generously opening their homes and hearts to their brothers and sisters in need.

To find out how you can help, I urge you to visit usafreedomcorps.gov or call 1–877–USA–CORPS. The citizens of the gulf coast can count on their fellow Americans in this time of trial, and their Government is standing with them as well.

This week I signed legislation providing an additional $52 billion for response and recovery efforts. We have already begun distributing $2,000 in emergency relief to every displaced household, money they can use immediately for food, clothing, and other essentials. I have also called for all people from disaster areas to be granted special evacuee status, making it easier for them to collect Federal benefits like food stamps and Medicaid wherever they are in America.

We are assisting the victims of Hurricane Katrina, and we will help the people of the gulf coast recover from adversity. Despite all they've endured, the people of that region are determined to rebuild their homes and reclaim their lives, and their fellow Americans are determined to help them. To accomplish the difficult work ahead of us, our Nation will call upon our vast resources and the ingenuity of our citizens, and these will be required in full measure.

Our greatest resource in such times is the compassionate character of the American people, because even the most destructive storm cannot weaken the heart and soul of our Nation. America will overcome this ordeal, and we will be stronger for it. Even in the deepest darkness, we can see the light of hope, and the light shows us the way forward. We will honor the memory of those we have lost. We will comfort the victims of Katrina, and we will make the gulf coast more vibrant than ever.

In all that lies before us, may God watch over the United States of America.

Thank you for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 7:50 a.m. on September 9 in the Cabinet Room at the White House for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on September 10. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on September 9 but was embargoed for release until the broadcast. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of this address.

Memorandum on the 2005 Combined Federal Campaign
September 9, 2005

Memorandum for the Heads of Executive Departments and Agencies

Subject: 2005 Combined Federal Campaign

The Secretary of Transportation, Norman Y. Mineta, has agreed to serve as the Chair of the 2005 Combined Federal Campaign of the National Capital Area (CFC–NCA). I ask you to enthusiastically support the CFC by personally chairing the campaign in your agency and by encouraging top agency officials around the country to do the same.

The Combined Federal Campaign is an important way for Federal employees to support thousands of worthy charities. Public servants not only contribute to the campaign but also assume leadership roles to ensure its success.

Your personal support and enthusiasm will help positively influence thousands of employees and will result in another successful campaign.

GEORGE W. BUSH

NOTE: This memorandum was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on September 12.

Remarks on the Aftermath of Hurricane Katrina and an Exchange With Reporters in New Orleans, Louisiana
September 12, 2005

The President. I want to thank the Governor for joining us today and thank the mayor for joining us. My impression of New Orleans is this, that there is a recovery on the way. There's progress being made, but there's a lot of serious and hard work that's yet to be done.

I was briefed today about the search and rescue that continues. I was also briefed about the different projects that are taking place: the containment of an oil spill; the electricity that's beginning to be turned back on. The mayor is anxious, of course, to get parts of his city up and running, but he's also mindful that there's a lot of work to be done for that to happen.

General Honore and Admiral Allen briefed us as well about the close coordination between the Federal Government, State government, and local government, all aimed at solving problems. And we just came through an area that had had substantial water in it, and the dewatering is an indication that the city is moving forward. But I'll repeat, we got a lot of work to do, a whole lot of work to do. And my pledge again to the Governor and the mayor is, the Federal Government will

work closely in coordination with their authorities.

You know, one of the things that the people are beginning to think about is the long-term revival of New Orleans, for example, or the surrounding parishes. My attitude is this: The people of New Orleans can design the vision; the people of New Orleans can lay out what New Orleans ought to look like in the future; and the Federal Government will help. The people of Louisiana can lay out their vision of what Louisiana will look like, and the Federal Government can help. I think that the best policy is one in which the Federal Government doesn't come down and say, "Here's what your city will look like." The best policy is one where the local folks say, "Here's what we want our city to look like, and let's work together to achieve that vision."

And so I—as we're beginning to get through this recovery phase and the rescue phase and the transitional phase—recovery phase—we're beginning to think through the—how to reconstitute this really important State as well as along the Mississippi coast, as well.

At any rate, again, I want to thank you all for being here. I appreciate you taking time out.

I'll answer a couple of questions. Yes.

Allegations of Racism

Q. Sir, what do you make of some of the comments that have been made by quite a number of people that there was a racial component to some of the people that were left behind and left without help?

The President. My attitude is this: The storm didn't discriminate, and neither will the recovery effort. When those Coast Guard choppers, many of whom were first on the scene, were pulling people off roofs, they didn't check the color of a person's skin. They wanted to save lives.

I can assure people from the—and I know from the State and local level as well that this recovery is going to be comprehensive. The rescue efforts were comprehensive, and the recovery will be comprehensive.

Learning From Relief Efforts

Q. Mr. President, does the Federal Government need the authority to come in earlier or even in advance of a storm that threatening?

The President. I think that's one of the interesting issues that Congress needs to take a look at. And it's really important that as we take a step back and learn lessons, that we are in a position to adequately answer the question, are we prepared for major catastrophes? Is the system such that we're able to work closely together? That's one of the key issues.

Q. Do you recommend that Congress consider allowing the Federal Government to act more quickly?

The President. I think it's very important for Congress to take a good, close look at what went on, what didn't go on, and come up with a series of recommendations. And my attitude is, is that we need to learn everything we possibly can; we need to make sure that this country is knitted up as well as it can be, in order to deal with significant problems and disasters. In the meantime, we've got to keep moving forward.

And I know there's been a lot of second-guessing. I can assure you, I'm not interested in that. What I'm interested in is solving problems. And there will be time to take a step back and to take a sober look at what went right, what didn't go right. There's a lot of information floating around that will be analyzed in an objective way, and that's important. And it's important for the people of this country to understand that all of us want to learn lessons. If there were to be a biological attack of some kind, we've got to make sure we understand the lessons learned, to be able to deal with catastrophe.

Iraq/Hurricane Katrina

Q. Will what is needed to get this area back on its feet have any impact on the timing of troop withdrawal in Iraq?

The President. In Iraq?

Q. Yes.

The President. No. We've got plenty of troops to do both. Let me just talk about that again. I've answered this question before, and you can speak to General Honore if you care to. He's the military man on the ground. It is preposterous to claim that the engagement in Iraq meant there wasn't enough troops here, just pure and simple.

Do you care to comment on that?

Lieutenant General Russel L. Honore. Well, we have about 90,000 members of the Reserve and National Guard deployed, of a total force of approximately 400,000. So 90,000 are deployed. We've got the capability. We're here. We're demonstrating in deed every day. We're performing the mission with the great support of the National Guard from multiple States. The response is here. The troops are getting the job done under the conditions that you see here today, and they're making America proud that we have that capability.

We have capability. We're applying it—air, land, and sea—our Federal forces in support of the Governors of Louisiana and Mississippi, under the direction of the adjutant general. The system is working. We've got the capability, and we're looking forward to get the job done and get the job completed, until the Governors tell us otherwise.

The President. The troop levels in Iraq will be decided by commanders on the ground. One, we're going to—our mission is to defeat the terrorists, is to win. Secondly, the strategy is, as Iraqis stand up, we will stand down. And so, to answer your question about the decisions made on the ground in Iraq, they will be made based upon the ability of the Iraqis to take the fight. And more and more Iraqi units are getting more and more qualified.

There's still a lot of work to be done there. Obviously, we're going to make sure we have a troop presence to help this political process go forward. There's an election—the ratification of the constitution election will be coming up, and of course, there will be elections this—later on this year. And we will have the troop levels necessary to make sure those elections go forward.

After all, the enemy wants to stop democracy. See, that's what they want to do. They want to kill enough people so that—in the hopes that democracy won't go forward. They tried that prior to more than 8 million Iraqis voting. They were unable to stop Iraqis from voting, because people want to be free. Deep in everybody's soul, regardless of your religion or where you live, is a desire to be free. And they can't stop it. And what we're going to do is help, and they can't stop democracy from moving. And so what we're going to do is help make sure those elections are accessible by—to the Iraqi people.

Yes.

Federal Emergency Management Agency

Q. Mr. President, there is a belief that we've been hearing for 2 weeks now on the ground that FEMA let the people here on the ground down. And perhaps, in turn, if you look at the evidence of what it's done to your popularity, perhaps, FEMA let you down. Do you think that your management style of sort of relying on your Departments, relying on the advice that you got in this particular scenario let you down? And do you think that plays into it at all?

The President. Look, there will be plenty of time to play the blame game. That's what you're trying to do.

Q. No, I'm trying to——

The President. You're trying to say somebody is at fault. Look—and I want to know. I want to know exactly what went on and how it went on. And we'll continually assess inside my administration. I sent Mike

Chertoff down here to make an assessment of how best to do the job. He made a decision; I accepted his decision. But we're moving on; we're going to solve these problems. And there will be ample time for people to take a look back and see the facts.

Now, as far as my own personal popularity goes, I don't make decisions based upon polls. I hope the American people appreciate that. You can't make difficult decisions if you have to take a poll. That's been my style ever since I've been the President. And of course, I rely upon good people. Of course, you got to as the President of the United States. You set the space; you set the strategy; you hold people to account. But yes, I'm relying upon good people. That's why Admiral Allen is here. He's good man. He can do the job. That's why General Honore is here. And so when I come into a briefing, I don't tell them what to do. They tell me the facts on the ground, and my question to them is, "Do you have what you need?"

New Orleans Levees

Q. Did they misinform you when you said that no one anticipated the breach of the levees?

The President. No, what I was referring to is this: When that storm came by, a lot of people said we dodged a bullet. When that storm came through at first, people said, "Whew." There was a sense of relaxation, and that's what I was referring to. And I, myself, thought we had dodged a bullet. You know why? Because I was listening to people, probably over the airways, say, "The bullet has been dodged." And that was what I was referring to.

Of course, there were plans in case the levee had been breached. There was a sense of relaxation in the moment, a critical moment. And thank you for giving me a chance to clarify that.

Anticipation of Katrina/Emergency Declarations

Q. Mr. President——

Q. Where were you when you realized the severity of the storm?

The President. I was—I knew that a big storm was coming on Monday, so I spoke to the country on Monday [Sunday] * morning about it. I said, "There's a big storm coming." I had presigned emergency declarations in anticipation of a big storm coming——

Q. Mr. President——

The President. ——which is, by the way, extraordinary. Most emergencies the President signs after the storm has hit. It's a rare occasion for the President to anticipate the severity of the storm and sign the documentation prior to the storm hitting. So, in other words, we anticipated a serious storm coming. But as the man's question said—it basically implied, wasn't there a moment where everybody said, "Well, gosh, we dodged the bullet," and yet the bullet hadn't been dodged.

Q. Mr. President——

The President. Last question.

Retrospective Analysis/Reconstruction

Q. This is 2 weeks in. You must have developed a clear image at this point of one critical thing that failed, one thing that went wrong in the first 5 days.

The President. Oh, I think there will be plenty of time to analyze, particularly the structure of the relationship between government levels. But again, there's—what I think Congress needs to do—I know Congress needs to do—and we're doing this internally as well—is to take a sober look at the decisionmaking that went on.

And what I want the people of this State and the State of Mississippi to understand is that we're moving forward with relief plans. And we're going to move forward with reconstruction plans, and we're going to do so in a coordinated way. And it's

* White House correction.

very important for the folks in New Orleans to understand that, at least as far as I'm concerned, this great city has got ample talent and ample genius to set the strategy and set the vision. And our role at the Federal Government is, obviously, within the law to help them realize that vision. And that's what I wanted to assure the mayor.

Thank you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:29 a.m. at the intersection of North Claiborne and Cleveland Streets. In his remarks, he referred to Gov. Kathleen Babineaux Blanco of Louisiana; Mayor C. Ray Nagin of New Orleans, LA; Lt. Gen. Russel L. Honore, USA, commanding general, First United States Army; and Vice Adm. Thad W. Allen, USCG, U.S. Coast Guard Chief of Staff. Lt. Gen. Honore referred to Gov. Haley Barbour of Mississippi; and Maj. Gen. Bennett C. Landreneau, Adjutant General, Louisiana National Guard. A portion of these remarks could not be verified because the tape was incomplete.

Remarks on the Aftermath of Hurricane Katrina and an Exchange With Reporters in Gulfport, Mississippi

September 12, 2005

The President. First of all, I want to thank the school principal for her hospitality. It's interesting, you know, she said she lost her school and lost her house, but I told her, she hadn't lost her smile or her will to succeed.

Behind us we've got U.S. troops and Mexican troops working together to help get this school up and running. The superintendent of schools here in the region tells me that they're trying to have everybody back in school by the end of October. And that's part of what you're beginning to see here in Mississippi. This country is beginning to rebuild, and lives are starting over.

I thank the Governor and the Congressman for their hospitality here. And, Mayor, thank you, sir. You've been in office for how long? Four months?

Mayor Gregory Brent Warr. Two months.

The President. Two months.

Governor Haley Barbour. It seems like 4. [*Laughter*]

The President. But there's a remarkable spirit all across this affected zone. It's a peculiar Mississippi spirit here, where there's a can-do attitude. People are coming together and slowly but surely putting their life back together. The Governor was telling me about the electricity, and the mayor has got a positive attitude.

I remember when I was down here last time, they were talking about gasoline. I saw a gasoline station up and running. And so progress is being made, and yet there's a lot of work to do, a lot of issues to be resolved, a lot of lives to be lifted up, a lot of hope to be restored.

I look forward to working with the congressional delegation, seeing people in Mississippi and the two Senators, of course, and the Governor, to address the problems. I mean, we are problem-solvers, and we look forward to working with the folks here.

I said something in Louisiana I want to repeat here in Mississippi, and that is, as these communities are rebuilt, they're going to be rebuilt by people from Mississippi. And as the coast is replanned and the vision of the coast emerges, it's going to be planned by the people of Mississippi. The role of the people in Washington is to support the Governors and support the Congressmen, support the mayors, as a vision for what this part of the world will look

like. And it's important for people to understand that, and that's a pledge we will keep.

Now, your school is going to open before the end of October?

Phyllis A. Bourn. We're hoping for the end of October.

The President. End of October—isn't that fantastic?

Ms. Bourn. Well, I'm sorry—the beginning of October.

The President. The beginning of October.

Ms. Bourn. The beginning of October for this school, for this school.

The President. Well, that's great. Well, thank you all very much. Thanks for having me.

Are we doing another round of questions today, or is one enough, do you think?

Resignation of FEMA Director Michael D. Brown

Q. Can you tell us——

Q. Have you accepted the resignation of Michael Brown, or have you heard about it?

The President. I haven't. No, I have not talked to Michael Brown or Mike Chertoff. That's who I'd talk to. As you know, I've been working. And when I get on Air Force One, I will call back to Washington. But I've been on the move.

Q. Our understanding is that he has resigned; he's put out a statement. Would that be appropriate——

The President. I haven't talked to Mike Chertoff yet, and that's what I intend to do when I get on the plane. You know, I—you probably—maybe you know something I don't know, but as you know, we've been working, and I haven't had a chance to get on the phone.

I just came from an extraordinary event. When I say I've been working, what I've been doing is thanking people. We just came from a church that's feeding people in need, that need help, and there were people from all over the country there. It was unbelievable. And so I was spending time thanking them and lifting their spirits.

So I can't comment on something that you may know more about than I do. So don't ask me again about a subject that——

Q. Can you say—have you been disappointed in the job that he did? Were you disappointed in the job he did?

The President. We went through this this morning, as you know, and I've said this—so I haven't changed my mind since you asked that question—or somebody asked the question about it——

Q. It was a little bit different. It wasn't specifically about him, sir.

The President. It's the same spirit, and that is, is that there will be plenty of time to figure out what went right and what went wrong. And the reason why it's important for us to figure that out at a national level is that, if a major event were to come—another major event—we want to make sure that there's appropriate relationship between the State and the local government. And so it's appropriate that we step back and take a look.

Here in Mississippi and in Louisiana, people want to move forward. They understand there's time to try to blame somebody. But they want to get their lives back together. And that's the spirit I see, and that's what——

Reconstruction After Hurricane Katrina

Q. On rebuilding, when you say it's up to—the vision of it is up to those on the ground, the local decisions, does that mean the Federal Government doesn't want to help rebuild things exactly as vulnerable as they were?

The President. Well, you see, I think that nobody wants to build a fragile society. Everybody wants to, when you rebuild, rebuild better. And we want to work with the local folks to achieve that.

The Congressman brought up an interesting issue. He said that he's waiting to find out what height—in order for Federal money to come, the houses have to be built

to a certain height. He's not trying to figure out the height; he just wants an answer.

Representative Gene Taylor. And the same thing with the highways, for example. We can't—a highway commission can't put out contracts for bridges until the Coast Guard tells us how the vertical clearance has got to be.

The President. So, obviously, there's a collaborative effort. And what the Congressman's basic point was and the Governor's point is, how about getting us the answers—for one reason: They want to get going, which is exciting news. And it's—so that's the kind of relationship I'm talking about.

Insurance Issues

Q. Mr. President, a lot of local people asking about insurance——

The President. Yes——

Q. ——the flood versus wind. What can you——

The President. I can't give an answer to that right now. But I am taking back the message, again, of the Congressman and the Governor, and particularly a lady I met at the church. She said she'd lived here for a long period of time, and she said, "I want to ask you something, President." She said, "How would you like it if your insurance company said, 'Ma'am, this is a flood event, and therefore, I'm not going to cover it, cover your house?' " I said, "I wouldn't like it a bit." She said, "Well, that's just what happened to me today." She had come back from where she had evacuated to, to hear that message. And she asked my opinion, and I said, "I'll find out the process that determines whether or not it's a wind or water event."

President's Focus on Domestic and Foreign Policy

Q. One more question. With all your focus on foreign policy over the next couple of days, what structures have you put in place to keep your attention also focused on the hurricane?

The President. I can do more than one thing at one time. That's what—I hope you—by the time I'm finished President, I hope you'll realize that the Government can do more than one thing at one time, and individuals in the Government can. And so I'll be in constant touch with—I have a hurricane recovery briefing every morning, for example. And I'll be in touch with Mike Chertoff. Andy Card, on my staff, will be in touch with the appropriate people. And so whether—if I'm focusing on the hurricane, I've got the capacity to focus on foreign policy, and vice versa. But I thank you for asking that question.

Thank you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:06 p.m. at Twenty-Eighth Street Elementary School. In his remarks, he referred to Glen East, superintendent, Gulfport School District. Participating in the exchange were Phyllis A. Bourn, principal, Twenty-Eighth Street Elementary School; Gov. Haley Barbour of Mississippi; Representative Gene Taylor of Mississippi; and Mayor Gregory Brent Warr of Gulfport, MS.

Statement on the Electoral Victory of Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi in Japan's General Elections

September 12, 2005

I extend my congratulations to Prime Minister Koizumi for his decisive victory in yesterday's elections and to the Japanese people for continuing Japan's robust democratic tradition. Prime Minister Koizumi is a bold leader and a good friend, and I

look forward to continuing the close partnership between our two countries.

The President's News Conference With President Jalal Talabani of the Iraqi Transitional Government
September 13, 2005

President Bush. Thank you all. It's an honor to welcome the first democratically elected President of Iraq to the White House.

President Talabani. Thank you.

President Bush. I'm proud to stand with a brave leader of the Iraqi people, a friend of the United States, and a testament to the power of human freedom.

Mr. President, thank you for your leadership. Thank you for your courage.

President Talabani has dedicated his life to the cause of liberty in Iraq. As a lawyer, a journalist, and a political leader in northern Iraq, he stood up to a brutal dictator, because he believes that every Iraqi deserves to be free. The dictator destroyed Kurdish villages, ordered poison gas attacks on a Kurdish city, and violently repressed other religious and ethnic groups. For President Talabani and his fellow citizens, the day Saddam was removed from power was a day of deliverance. And America will always be proud that we led the armies of liberation.

In the past 2 years, the Iraqi people have made their vision of their future clear. This past January, more than 8 million Iraqis defied the car bombers and the assassins and voted in free elections. It is an inspiring act of unity when 80 percent of the elected National Assembly chose the President, a member of Iraq's Kurdish minority, to lead the free nation.

In our meeting today, I congratulated the President on his election, and I thanked him for his leadership on Iraq's draft constitution. The draft constitution is an historic milestone. It protects fundamental freedoms, including religion, assembly, conscience, and expression. It calls for a federal system of government, which is essential to preserving the unity of a diverse nation like Iraq. It declares that all Iraqis are equal before the law, without regard to gender, ethnicity, and religion.

The Iraqi people can be proud of the draft constitution, and when an election to ratify that constitution is held next month, they will have a chance to vote their conscience at the polls.

As the Iraqi people continue on the path to democracy, the enemies of freedom remain brutal and determined. The killers in Iraq are the followers of the same ideology as those who attacked America 4 years ago. Their vision is for an Iraq that looks like Afghanistan under the Taliban, a society where freedom is crushed, girls are denied schooling, and terrorists have a safe haven to plot attacks on America and other free people.

To impose their hateful vision, our enemies know they must drive America out of Iraq before the Iraqi people can secure their own freedom. They believe we will retreat in the face of violence, so they're committing acts of staggering brutality, murdering Iraqi children receiving candy or hospital workers treating the wounded. We have no doubt that our enemies will continue to kill. Yet we also know they cannot achieve their aims unless we lose our resolve.

Today, Mr. President, I pledge that we will not waver, and I appreciate your same pledge. Iraq will take its place among the

world's democracies. The enemies of freedom will be defeated.

President Talabani and I discussed our strategy for the months ahead. America will stand with the Iraqi people as they move forward with the democratic process. We're seeing hopeful developments in places like Fallujah and Ramadi and Mosul, where Iraqis are registering to vote, many for the first time—well, obviously, for the first time.

At the same time, American troops will stay on the offensive, alongside Iraqi security forces, to hunt down our common enemies. At this hour, American and Iraqi forces are conducting joint operations to rout out terrorists and insurgents in Tall 'Afar. Our objective is to defeat the enemies of a free Iraq, and we're working to prepare more Iraqi forces to join the fight. As Iraqis stand up, Americans will stand down. And when the mission is complete, our troops will come home with the honor they have earned.

Tomorrow President Talabani and I will take our seats at the United Nations in New York. The session will mark the first time in a half-century that Iraq is represented by a freely elected government.

Securing freedom in Iraq has required great sacrifice, Mr. President. You know that better than anybody. And there's going to be difficult days ahead. Yet I have no doubt about the impact of a democratic Iraq on the rest of the world. If Iraq becomes a federal, unified democracy, people throughout the broader Middle East will demand their own liberty. The Middle East will become more peaceful, and America and the world become more secure.

We're proud to call you friend, Mr. President, and proud to have you as an ally in the war on terror. On behalf of the American people, I want to thank you for Iraq's generous pledge of aid to the victims of Hurricane Katrina. Welcome to the United States.

President Talabani. Thank you. Thank you, Mr. President, for your kind remarks. It is an honor for me to stand here today as a representative of free Iraq. It is an honor to present the world's youngest democracy.

In the name of Iraqi people, I say to you, Mr. President, and to the glorious American people, thank you. Thank you. Thank you, because you liberated us from the worst kind of dictatorship. Our people suffered too much from this worst kind of dictatorship. The signal is mass graves with hundred thousand of Iraqi innocent children and women, young and old men. Thank you and thanks to the United States, there are now 15 million Muslims in Afghanistan and Iraq liberated by your courageous leadership and decision to liberate us, Mr. President.

We agree with Mr. President Bush that democracy is the solution to the problems of the Middle East. Mr. President, you are a visionary, great statesman. We salute you. We are grateful to you. We will never forget what you have done for our people.

President Bush. Thank you, sir.

President Talabani. We have had a good discussion with Mr. President. We are partners. We are proud to say openly and to repeat it, that we are partners of the United States of America in fighting against tyranny, terrorism, and for democracy. It is something we are not shy to say and will repeat it everywhere, here and in Iraq and the United Nations and everywhere.

Iraq is America's ally in the war against terrorism. Our soldiers are now fighting side by side with your brave soldiers, now and every day. We have captured many senior elements of Al Qaida. We killed many of them, and we have also many of them in our prisons.

With your support, we could create a society enjoying democracy for the first time, obviously. Now Iraq is a free country. We have all kinds of democracy, all kinds of freedom of expression of parties, groups, civil society organizations—that we can say that our democracy is unique in the Middle East.

Our strategy is sound. We build democracy and defend democracy. We talk about how we could improve our tactics. There is progress in security in our country. The number of the bomb cars reduced. The places which were under the full control of the terrorists are now liberated. And they're now registering their names for the new election.

In the areas which was known that there was the area of Al Qaida now it became the area of Iraq. And two signals, important signals appeared there in that area—the people started to hate and to fight terrorism. Now we have Iraqi Arab tribes, Sunni tribes fighting terrorism and Al Qaida. We have also people who are in—[*inaudible*]—who are cooperating with Iraqi forces, with American forces against terrorism. It is a good signal that our people start to understand that terrorism is the enemy of Iraqi people before becoming the enemy of Americans. They are killing our civilians, our innocent children, students. They are destroying our mosques—church, everywhere, regardless of what may happen to the people.

And we are now progressing gradually. Last year, for example, Fallujah was their capital. Now it is as Iraqi city. A year ago, Najaf was a battlefield. Najaf is a holy city of Shiites, the Vatican of the Shiites. Now Najaf is being rebuilt, is free, and ruled by the elected committee, elected government.

There are still important security challenges we are not neglecting. But we are fighting Al Qaida. Now our fight in Tall 'Afar proved that the enemy is going to be weakened and low morale. The fighting in Tall 'Afar was easy to defeat the terrorists and to liberate the town.

The so-called jihadists want to impose oppression and dictatorship and worst kind of society on our people. For that, they are not only—so they are not only the enemy of Iraq, but they are the enemy of humanity, the enemy of real Islam, and the enemy of all Middle East peoples. Together with our American friends and partners, we will defeat them.

Today, American and international presence in Iraq is vital. The American and international presence in Iraq is vital for democracy in Iraq and in the Middle East and also for prevent foreign interference in the internal affairs of Iraq.

We will set no timetable for withdrawal, Mr. President. A timetable will help the terrorists, will encourage them that they could defeat superpower of the world and the Iraqi people. We hope that by the end of 2006, our security forces are up to the level of taking responsibility from many American troops with complete agreement with Americans. We don't want to do anything without the agreement with the Americans because we don't want to give any signal to the terrorists that our will to defeat them is weakened, or they can defeat us.

We are proud that one day will come—as soon as possible, of course, we hope—that American troops can proudly return home, and we tell them, "Thank you, dear friends," and you are faithful to friendship. Of course, we are sorry for the sacrifices of American people in Iraq, but I think a great people like America has a mission in the history. They have sacrificed hundreds of thousands of his sons in the war, First World War, Second World War, and in liberating people in—[*inaudible*]—in Afghanistan, Kurdistan. And the great leader, Mr. George W. Bush, is continuing the same mission of the American people. We are grateful. We are grateful for American generosity, and we honor—we honor—sacrifices of America in Iraq—and everywhere, not only in Iraq.

We also need our neighbors, at least some of them, to stop attacking Iraqi democracy. We want them to join us in fighting against terrorism. We want our Arab brothers stopping media, at least the official media, to support terrorism. We want them to stand with us against terrorism, because

terrorism is the enemy of all Arab and Muslim countries in the world.

But we will proceed, and we will remember those who helped us in our struggle to establish a democratic Iraq. And you are first, those people who supported us for this noble mission.

There is, in Iraq, political progress. We are taking the gun out of Iraqi politics for the first time. Iraqis are—speaking to each other in peaceful dialog, not with arms. The majority of Iraqis are committed to political process. Iraq is a diverse country. They are mostly settling their differences peacefully.

We have agreed a draft constitution. Of course, it is not perfect document, but I think it is one of the best constitutions in the Middle East. Of course, we didn't solve all problems; we have some problems. We are still suffering from many problems. But we are achieving progress on all fields, economic, trade, education, political life. And we hope that we will remain having the support of the United States, and yourself, Mr. President, and other friends in Arab world and in Europe.

It is clear that we are a young democracy, but our draft constitution has a bill of rights, ensures the equality of all Iraqis before the law regardless of their gender, creed, religion, or ethnicity. It enshrines separation of powers and involves many checks and balances on the exercise of power. It is the best constitution in the entire region, as we claim. We hope it will be correct.

We are reaching out to some other Iraqi citizens who were not able to participate in the election. I mean our Arab Sunni brothers. We tried and we involved with them in the process. When the results of the election was announced, the two main lists of alliance, the Kurdistan Alliance and the United Front of Iraq Shiite Alliance, we got 238 votes, and the Assembly was 275. But nevertheless, we tried to bring our Sunni Arabs to the Government to participate. We elected a Vice President, an Arab Sunni; two Deputy Prime Ministers; the Speaker of the House is a Sunni; and six ministers, among them, two main posts, the Minister of Defense and Minister of Industry.

It means that we are anxious to have all Iraqis united and to solve all our problems through dialog. We are calling all Iraqis to come to participate in the democratic process and to say what they want, and they are free to decide the Government—decide the President of Iraq, the Prime Minister, the ministers, and they are able to say what they want through democratic process. They can say their slogans and demands.

This, of course, constitution is not perfect, but it can be amended in the future, if the Iraqi people—[*inaudible*]—want this. But now, compared with others, we are proud to have such a kind of constitution. Some of our brothers, Sunni Arabs, are under the threat of terrorism. We will try our best to liberate them from terrorism and from the violence.

To those in America, in other countries, still ask of war of liberation in Iraq, if it was right—the right decision, I say, "Please, please come to Iraq to visit the mass graves, to see what happened to the Iraqi people and to see what now going on in Iraq." To those who talk of stability, I say, "Saddam imposed the stability of the mass graves." To the terrorists, I say, "You will never win. Freedom will win in Iraq."

Thank you, Mr. President.

President Bush. Good job. Thank you.

A couple of questions. Two a side. Nedra [Nedra Pickler, Associated Press].

U.S. Response to Disasters and Terrorist Attacks

Q. Mr. President, given what happened with Katrina, shouldn't Americans be concerned if their Government isn't prepared to respond to another disaster or even a terrorist attack?

President Bush. Katrina exposed serious problems in our response capability at all levels of government. And to the extent

that the Federal Government didn't fully do its job right, I take responsibility. I want to know what went right and what went wrong. I want to know how to better cooperate with State and local government, to be able to answer that very question that you asked: Are we capable of dealing with a severe attack or another severe storm? And that's a very important question. And it's in our national interest that we find out exactly what went on and—so that we can better respond.

One thing for certain, having been down there three times and have seen how hard people are working, I'm not going to defend the process going in, but I am going to defend the people who are on the frontline of saving lives. Those Coast Guard kids pulling people out of the—out of the floods are—did heroic work. The first-responders on the ground, whether they be State folks or local folks, did everything they could. There's a lot of people that are—have done a lot of hard work to save lives.

And so I want to know what went right and what went wrong, to address those. But I also want people in America to understand how hard people are working to save lives down there in—not only New Orleans but surrounding parishes and along the gulf coast.

Mr. President, you want to call on somebody?

[*At this point, a question was asked and answered in Arabic, and no translation was provided. The reporter then continued in English.*]

Syria

Q. If I may, Mr. President, it's been a scathing attack from top officials of your administration on Syria yesterday for allowing foreign fighters to cross the border. We heard yesterday from Ambassador Khalilzad. Is this an escalation on the pressure that you're putting on Syria? And what more can you do when you say that all options are open?

President Bush. Thank you.

President Talabani. May I answer?

President Bush. Please, yes. You might want to try it English. [*Laughter*]

President Talabani. Well, I say it in Arabic because the question was in Arabic.

[*President Talabani began in Arabic, and no translation was provided.*]

President Bush. Oops. [*Laughter*]

[*President Talabani finished his answer in Arabic, and no translation was provided.*]

President Bush. I'm not sure if I agree or not, but—[*laughter*]—Ambassador did speak strongly about Syria because he understands that the Syrian Government can do a lot more to prevent the flow of foreign fighters into Iraq. These people are coming from Syria into Iraq and killing a lot of innocent people. They're killing—they're trying to kill our folks as well. And so, of course, he's speaking strongly about that.

And the Syrian leader must understand, we take his lack of action seriously. And the Government is going to become more and more isolated as a result of two things, one, not being cooperative with the Iraqi Government in terms of securing Iraq, and two, not being fully transparent about what they did in Lebanon.

And so we're going to work with our friends. And this is a subject of conversation, of course, I'll have with allies in places like New York and other times I communicate with our allies, that Syria must be a focus of getting them to change their behavior, particularly as it regards to democracy and trying to prevent democracies from emerging.

Toby [Tabassum Zakaria, Reuters].

Iran's Nuclear Program

Q. Mr. President, do you believe at this point that Iran will be referred to the U.N. Security Council to face possible sanctions over its nuclear program? And how will you convince reluctant members like China that this is the way forward?

President Bush. There is still an IAEA process to go forward. And we will work with our Ambassador at the IAEA, Ambassador Schulte, to continue to press forward with a full disclosure about Iranian intentions so that then the Security Council can make a—determine the right policy to go forward.

I will bring the subject up with leaders whom I'll be meeting with today and tomorrow and later on this week. I will be speaking candidly about Iran with the—Hu Jintao, as well as with President Putin, for example. Just had a conversation with Tony Blair, and the subject came up.

It is very important for the world to understand that Iran with a nuclear weapon will be incredibly destabilizing. And therefore, we must work together to prevent them from having the wherewithal to develop a nuclear weapon. It should be a warning to all of us that they have—in the past, didn't fully disclose their programs, their programs aimed at helping them develop a weapon. They have insisted that they have a civilian nuclear program, and I thought a rational approach to that would be to allow them to receive enriched uranium from a third party under the guise of international inspections—that will enable them to have civilian nuclear power without learning how to make a bomb.

Some of us are wondering why they need civilian nuclear power anyway. They're awash with hydrocarbons. Nevertheless, it's a right of a government to want to have a civilian nuclear program. And—but there ought to be guidelines in which they be allowed to have that civilian nuclear program. And one such guideline would be in such a way that they don't gain the expertise necessary to be able to enrich.

This is a subject of grave concern, and it's something that we're spending a lot of time on in this administration. I want to applaud the Germans and the French and the British for sticking together in developing a common message to the Iranians. And now we'll see how the Iranians respond, here on their visit to the United States.

Final question, Mr. President.

Q. Mr. President, I hope you will excuse me, since you've never had Kurdish—spoken Kurdish, I put my question in Kurdish.

[*The question was asked in Kurdish, and no translation was provided.*]

President Talabani. With your permission, Mr. President, he's from America and his voice, American voice in Kurdish—I must answer in Kurdish.

President Bush. Yes. Answer his question—perfect.

[*President Talabani answered in Kurdish, and no translation was provided.*]

President Bush. On that cheery note, the press conference is over. [*Laughter*]

Thank you, Mr. President. Good job.

NOTE: The President's news conference began at 11:35 a.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to former President Saddam Hussein of Iraq; U.S. Ambassador to Iraq Zalmay Khalilzad; President Bashar al-Asad of Syria; U.S. Ambassador to the International Atomic Energy Agency Gregory Schulte; President Hu Jintao of China; President Vladimir Putin of Russia; and Prime Minister Tony Blair of the United Kingdom. President Talabani referred to Deputy President Ghazi al-Ujayl al-Yawr, Deputy Prime Minister Abid Mutlaq Hamud al-Jabburi, Minister of Defense Sadun al-Dulaymi, and Minister of Industry and Minerals Usama al-Najafi of the Iraqi Transitional Government; and Speaker of the Iraqi Transitional National Assembly Hajim al-Hassani.

Remarks Prior to Discussions With President Hu Jintao of China in New York City

September 13, 2005

President Bush. I am pleased to welcome President Hu back to the United States. I've been looking forward to this meeting. We've got a lot to discuss. We will, of course, discuss areas of interest, like economic matters. We will discuss North Korea and Iran. I look forward to a discussion about making sure we work together to deal with a potential pandemic in avian flu.

We'll talk about—I will bring up human rights. Most importantly, I view this visit as an opportunity to continue a dialog in dealing with a very important relationship for the United States and the world.

So I welcome you, Mr. President.

President Hu. I am very pleased to have this opportunity to meet with President Bush in New York. To begin with, I would like to extend, on behalf of the Chinese Government and the Chinese people, our deepest sympathy to the American Government and people for the human loss and property loss inflicted by Hurricane Katrina in the Southern American States.

President Bush. Thank you.

President Hu. May the American people overcome the disaster and rebuild their beautiful homes at an early date.

As things stand now, the China-U.S. relationship, on the whole, has been developing quite well. The two sides have stayed in close touch and communication, and the two sides have also enjoyed effective coordination and cooperation in a wide range of important areas and on a number of important issues, including counterterrorism, nonproliferation, affairs related to the United Nations, Asia-Pacific affairs, as well as boosting global and regional economic growth.

Facts have proven that a sound and steadily growing China-U.S. relationship not only serves the interests of our two peoples but also contributes to peace, stability, and development in the world. Our economic relationship and trade is not only an important component of our bilateral relationship as a whole but also represents a major driving force behind the furtherance of this relationship.

We need to see the fact that mutually beneficially and win-win cooperation is the mainstream of our relationship. At the same time, there's no denial that as our bilateral trade develops so fast and to such a large scale, it is inevitable that we may have some frictions.

What I would like to express here is that China does not pursue a huge trade surplus in its trade with the United States. And we are willing to work with the United States to take effective measures to increase China's import from the United States and work hard to gradually address the trade imbalances in the two-way trade in the further expansion of our trading ties and economic cooperation.

At the same time, China will continue to step up its efforts to protect intellectual properties, and we will certainly enhance our efforts in fighting all kinds of violations in this regard. And we are going to protect the legitimate rights and interests of all international intellectual property rights owners, including those in the United States.

The proper handling of the Taiwan question holds the key to the sound and the steady growth of the China-U.S. relationship. President Bush has, on various occasions, stated his commitment to the "one China" policy, the three Sino-U.S. joint communiques, and opposition to so-called Taiwan independence, which I highly appreciate. I hope that the United States will join the Chinese side in safeguarding peace

and stability across the Taiwan Straits and opposing so-called Taiwan independence.

We have always stood for a nuclear-weapon free Korean Peninsula, stood for a peaceful solution to the nuclear issue through dialog, and stood for peace and stability on the Korean Peninsula and in Northeast Asia as a whole. We stand ready to step up our communication and cooperation with the United States so that we can facilitate fresh progress in the second session of the fourth round of the six-party talks.

In short, I stand ready to work together with President Bush to comprehensively move forward the constructive and cooperative relationship between our two countries.

I'm sorry for taking too much of your time. [*Laughter*]

President Bush. That's fine. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 5:32 p.m. in Room 35H at the Waldorf-Astoria. President Hu spoke in Chinese, and his remarks were translated by an interpreter.

Message to the Senate Transmitting the Israel-United States Protocol Amending the Convention Relating to Extradition
September 13, 2005

To the Senate of the United States:

With a view to receiving the advice and consent of the Senate to ratification, I transmit herewith the Protocol between the Government of the United States and the Government of the State of Israel, signed at Jerusalem on July 6, 2005.

In addition, I transmit for the information of the Senate the report of the Department of State with respect to the Protocol. As the report explains, the Protocol will not require implementing legislation.

The Protocol amends the Convention Relating to Extradition (the "1962 Convention"), signed at Washington on December 10, 1962. The Protocol updates the 1962 Convention in a manner consistent with our modern extradition treaties. The Protocol will, upon entry into force, enhance cooperation between the law enforcement communities of both nations and make a significant contribution to international law enforcement efforts.

I recommend that the Senate give early and favorable consideration to the Protocol and give its advice and consent to ratification.

GEORGE W. BUSH

The White House,
September 13, 2005.

NOTE: This message was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on September 14.

Remarks to the Plenary Session of the United Nations General Assembly in New York City
September 14, 2005

Mr. Secretary-General, Mr. President, distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen: Thank you for the privilege of being here for the 60th anniversary of the United Nations. Thank you for your dedication to the

vital work and great ideals of this institution.

We meet at a time of great challenge for America and the world. At this moment, men and women along my country's gulf coast are recovering from one of the worst natural disasters in American history. Many have lost homes and loved ones and all their earthly possessions. In Alabama and Mississippi and Louisiana, whole neighborhoods have been lifted from their foundations and sent crashing into the streets. A great American city is working to turn the flood waters and reclaim its future.

We have witnessed the awesome power of nature and the greater power of human compassion. Americans have responded to their neighbors in need, and so have many of the nations represented in this chamber. All together, more than 115 countries and nearly a dozen international organizations have stepped forward with offers of assistance. To every nation, every province, and every community across the world that is standing with the American people in this hour of need, I offer the thanks of my nation.

Your response, like the response to last year's tsunami, has shown once again that the world is more compassionate and hopeful when we act together. This truth was the inspiration for the United Nations. The U.N.'s founding members laid out great and honorable goals in the charter they drafted six decades ago. That document commits this organization to work to "save succeeding generations from the scourge of war," "reaffirm faith in fundamental human rights," and "promote social progress and better standards of life in larger freedom." We remain committed to those noble ideals. As we respond to great humanitarian needs, we must actively respond to the other great challenges of our time. We must continue to work to ease suffering and to spread freedom and to lay the foundations of lasting peace for our children and grandchildren.

In this young century, the far corners of the world are linked more closely than ever before, and no nation can remain isolated and indifferent to the struggles of others. When a country or a region is filled with despair and resentment and vulnerable to violent and aggressive ideologies, the threat passes easily across oceans and borders and could threaten the security of any peaceful country.

Terrorism fed by anger and despair has come to Tunisia, to Indonesia, to Kenya, to Tanzania, to Morocco, to Israel, to Saudi Arabia, to the United States, to Turkey, to Spain, to Russia, to Egypt, to Iraq, and the United Kingdom. And those who have not seen attacks on their own soil have still shared in the sorrow, from Australians killed in Bali to Italians killed in Egypt, to the citizens of dozens of nations who were killed on September the 11th, 2001, here in the city where we meet. The lesson is clear: There can be no safety in looking away or seeking the quiet life by ignoring the hardship and oppression of others. Either hope will spread or violence will spread, and we must take the side of hope.

Sometimes our security will require confronting threats directly, and so a great coalition of nations has come together to fight the terrorists across the world. We've worked together to help break up terrorist networks that cross borders and rout out radical cells within our own borders. We've eliminated terrorist sanctuaries. We're using our diplomatic and financial tools to cut off their financing and drain them of support. And as we fight, the terrorists must know the world stands united against them. We must complete the Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism that will put every nation on record: The targeting and deliberate killing by terrorists of civilians and non-combatants cannot be justified or legitimized by any cause or grievance.

And the world's free nations are determined to stop the terrorists and their allies from acquiring the terrible weapons that

would allow them to kill on a scale equal to their hatred. For that reason, more than 60 countries are supporting the Proliferation Security Initiative to intercept shipments of weapons of mass destruction on land, on sea, and at air. The terrorists must know that wherever they go, they cannot escape justice.

Later today, the Security Council has an opportunity to put the terrorists on notice when it votes on a resolution that condemns the incitement of terrorist acts, the resolution that calls upon all states to take appropriate steps to end such incitement. We also need to sign and implement the International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism so that all those who seek radioactive materials or nuclear devices are prosecuted and extradited, wherever they are. We must send a clear message to the rulers of outlaw regimes that sponsor terror and pursue weapons of mass murder: You will not be allowed to threaten the peace and stability of the world.

Confronting our enemies is essential, and so civilized nations will continue to take the fight to the terrorists. Yet we know that this war will not be won by force of arms alone. We must defeat the terrorists on the battlefield, and we must also defeat them in the battle of ideas. We must change the conditions that allow terrorists to flourish and recruit, by spreading the hope of freedom to millions who've never known it. We must help raise up the failing states and stagnant societies that provide fertile ground for the terrorists. We must defend and extend a vision of human dignity and opportunity and prosperity, a vision far stronger than the dark appeal of resentment and murder.

To spread a vision of hope, the United States is determined to help nations that are struggling with poverty. We are committed to the Millennium Development goals. This is an ambitious agenda that includes cutting poverty and hunger in half, ensuring that every boy and girl in the world has access to primary education, and halting the spread of AIDS—all by 2015.

We have a moral obligation to help others and a moral duty to make sure our actions are effective. At Monterrey in 2002, we agreed to a new vision for the way we fight poverty and curb corruption and provide aid in this new millennium. Developing countries agreed to take responsibility for their own economic progress through good governance and sound policies and the rule of law. Developed countries agreed to support those efforts, including increased aid to nations that undertake necessary reforms. My own country has sought to implement the Monterrey Consensus by establishing the new Millennium Challenge Account. This account is increasing U.S. aid for countries that govern justly, invest in their people, and promote economic freedom.

More needs to be done. I call on all the world's nations to implement the Monterrey Consensus. Implementing the Monterrey Consensus means continuing on the long, hard road to reform. Implementing the Monterrey Consensus means creating a genuine partnership between developed and developing countries to replace the donor-client relationship of the past. And implementing the Monterrey Consensus means welcoming all developing countries as full participants to the global economy, with all the requisite benefits and responsibilities.

Tying aid to reform is essential to eliminating poverty, but our work doesn't end there. For many countries, AIDS, malaria, and other diseases are both humanitarian tragedies and significant obstacles to development. We must give poor countries access to the emergency lifesaving drugs they need to fight these infectious diseases. Through our bilateral programs and the Global Fund, the United States will continue to lead the world in providing the resources to defeat the plague of HIV/AIDS.

Today, America is working with local authorities and organizations in the largest initiative in history to combat a specific disease. Across Africa, we're helping local health officials expand AIDS testing facilities, train and support doctors and nurses and counselors, and upgrade clinics and hospitals. Working with our African partners, we have now delivered lifesaving treatment to more than 230,000 people in sub-Sahara Africa. We are ahead of schedule to meet an important objective, providing HIV/AIDS treatment for nearly 2 million adults and children in Africa. At the G–8 summit at Gleneagles, Scotland, we set a clear goal, an AIDS-free generation in Africa. I challenge every member of the United Nations to take concrete steps to achieve that goal.

We're also working to fight malaria. This preventable disease kills more than a million people around the world every year and leaves poverty and grief in every land it touches. The United States has set a goal of cutting the malaria death rate in half in at least 15 highly endemic African countries. To achieve that goal, we've pledged to increase our funding for malaria treatment and prevention by more than $1.2 billion over the next 5 years. We invite other nations to join us in this effort by committing specific aid to the dozens of other African nations in need of it. Together we can fight malaria and save hundreds of thousands of lives and bring new hope to countries that have been devastated by this terrible disease.

As we strengthen our commitment to fighting malaria and AIDS, we must also remain on the offensive against new threats to public health such as the avian influenza. If left unchallenged, this virus could become the first pandemic of the 21st century. We must not allow that to happen. Today I am announcing a new International Partnership on Avian and Pandemic Influenza. The Partnership requires countries that face an outbreak to immediately share information and provide samples to the World Health Organization. By requiring transparency, we can respond more rapidly to dangerous outbreaks and stop them on time. Many nations have already joined this partnership. We invite all nations to participate. It's essential we work together, and as we do so, we will fulfill a moral duty to protect our citizens and heal the sick and comfort the afflicted.

Even with increased aid to fight disease and reform economies, many nations are held back by another heavy challenge, the burden of debt. So America and many nations have also acted to lift this burden that limits the growth of developing economies and holds millions of people in poverty. Today, poor countries with the heaviest debt burdens are receiving more than $30 billion in debt relief. And to prevent the build-up of future debt, my country and other nations have agreed that international financial institutions should increasingly provide new aid in the form of grants, rather than loans. The G–8 agreed at Gleneagles to go further. To break the lend-and-forgive cycle permanently, we agreed to cancel 100 percent of the debt for the world's most heavily indebted nations. I call upon the World Bank and the IMF to finalize this historic agreement as soon as possible.

We will fight to lift the burden of poverty from places of suffering, not just for the moment but permanently. And the surest path to greater wealth is greater trade. In a letter he wrote to me in August, the Secretary-General commended the G–8's work but told me that aid and debt relief are not enough. The Secretary-General said that we also need to reduce trade barriers and subsidies that are holding developing countries back. I agree with the Secretary-General: The Doha round is "the most promising way" to achieve this goal.

A successful Doha round will reduce and eliminate tariffs and other barriers on farm and industrial goods. It will end unfair agricultural subsidies. It will open up global markets for services. Under Doha, every

nation will gain, and the developing world stands to gain the most. Historically, developing nations that open themselves up to trade grow at several times the rate of other countries. The elimination of trade barriers could lift hundreds of millions of people out of poverty over the next 15 years. The stakes are high. The lives and futures of millions of the world's poorest citizens hang in the balance, and so we must bring the Doha trade talks to a successful conclusion.

Doha is an important step toward a larger goal. We must tear down the walls that separate the developed and developing worlds. We need to give the citizens of the poorest nations the same ability to access the world economy that the people of wealthy nations have, so they can offer their goods and talents on the world market alongside everyone else. We need to ensure that they have the same opportunities to pursue their dreams, provide for their families, and live lives of dignity and self-reliance.

And the greatest obstacles to achieving these goals are the tariffs and subsidies and barriers that isolate people of developing nations from the great opportunities of the 21st century. Today, I reiterate the challenge I have made before: We must work together in the Doha negotiations to eliminate agricultural subsidies that distort trade and stunt development and to eliminate tariffs and other barriers to open markets for farmers around the world. Today I broaden the challenge by making this pledge: The United States is ready to eliminate all tariffs, subsidies, and other barriers to free flow of goods and services as other nations do the same. This is key to overcoming poverty in the world's poorest nations. It's essential we promote prosperity and opportunity for all nations.

By expanding trade, we spread hope and opportunity to the corners of the world, and we strike a blow against the terrorists who feed on anger and resentment. Our agenda for freer trade is part of our agenda for a freer world, where people can live and worship and raise their children as they choose. In the long run, the best way to protect the religious freedom and the rights of women and minorities is through institutions of self-rule, which allow people to assert and defend their own rights. All who stand for human rights must also stand for human freedom.

This is a moment of great opportunity in the cause of freedom. Across the world, hearts and minds are opening to the message of human liberty as never before. In the last 2 years alone, tens of millions have voted in free elections in Afghanistan and Iraq, in Lebanon and the Palestinian Territories, in Kyrgyzstan, in Ukraine, and Georgia. And as they claim their freedom, they are inspiring millions more across the broader Middle East. We must encourage their aspirations. We must nurture freedom's progress, and the United Nations has a vital role to play.

Through the new U.N. Democracy Fund, the democratic members of the U.N. will work to help others who want to join the democratic world. It is fitting that the world's largest democracy, India, has taken a leadership role in this effort, pledging $10 million to get the fund started. Every free nation has an interest in the success of this fund, and every free nation has a responsibility in advancing the cause of liberty.

The work of democracy is larger than holding a fair election. It requires building the institutions that sustain freedom. Democracy takes different forms in different cultures, yet all free societies have certain things in common. Democratic nations uphold the rule of law, impose limits on the power of the state, treat women and minorities as full citizens. Democratic nations protect private property, free speech, and religious expression. Democratic nations grow in strength because they reward and respect the creative gifts of their people. And democratic nations contribute to peace and stability because they seek national

greatness in achievements of their citizens, not the conquest of their neighbors.

For these reasons, the whole world has a vital interest in the success of a free Iraq, and no civilized nation has an interest in seeing a new terrorist state emerge in that country. So the free world is working together to help the Iraqi people to establish a new nation that can govern itself, sustain itself, and defend itself. It's an exciting opportunity for all of us in this chamber. And the United Nations has played a vital role in the success of the January elections, where 8½ million Iraqis defied the terrorists and cast their ballots. And since then, the United Nations has supported Iraq's elected leaders as they drafted a new constitution.

The United Nations and its member states must continue to stand by the Iraqi people as they complete the journey to a fully constitutional government. And when Iraqis complete their journey, their success will inspire others to claim their freedom; the Middle East will grow in peace and hope and liberty; and all of us will live in a safer world.

The advance of freedom and security is the calling of our time. It is the mission of the United Nations. The United Nations was created to spread the hope of liberty and to fight poverty and disease and to help secure human rights and human dignity for all the world's people. To help make these promises real, the United Nations must be strong and efficient, free of corruption, and accountable to the people it serves. The United Nations must stand for integrity and live by the high standards it sets for others. And meaningful institutional reforms must include measures to improve internal oversight, identify cost savings, and ensure that precious resources are used for their intended purpose.

The United Nations has taken the first steps toward reform. The process will continue in the General Assembly this fall, and the United States will join with others to lead the effort. And the process of reform begins with members taking our responsibilities seriously. When this great institution's member states choose notorious abusers of human rights to sit on the U.N. Human Rights Commission, they discredit a noble effort and undermine the credibility of the whole organization. If member countries want the United Nations to be respected—respected and effective, they should begin by making sure it is worthy of respect.

At the start of a new century, the world needs the United Nations to live up to its ideals and fulfill its mission. The founding members of this organization knew that the security of the world would increasingly depend on advancing the rights of mankind, and this would require the work of many hands. After committing America to the idea of the U.N. in 1945, President Franklin Roosevelt declared: "The structure of world peace cannot be the work of one man or one party or one nation." Peace is the responsibility of every nation and every generation.

In each era of history, the human spirit has been challenged by the forces of darkness and chaos. Some challenges are the acts of nature; others are the works of man. This organization was convened to meet these challenges by harnessing the best instincts of humankind, the strength of the world united in common purpose.

With courage and conscience, we will meet our responsibilities to protect the lives and rights of others. And when we do, we will help fulfill the promise of the United Nations and ensure that every human being enjoys the peace and the freedom and the dignity our Creator intended for all.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:48 a.m. in the General Assembly Chamber at the United Nations Headquarters. In his remarks, he referred to Secretary-General Kofi Annan of the United Nations. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of these remarks.

Remarks Prior to Discussions With Prime Minister Ariel Sharon of Israel in New York City
September 14, 2005

President Bush. Mr. Prime Minister, thank you. I'm looking forward to our meeting. I've said several times publicly that I am inspired by your courageous decision to give peace a chance. And I know it was hard, but I admire your courage. And I look forward to talking to you about how we can get on the roadmap.

One thing is essential, and the world must hear, that now is the time for Palestinians to come together and establish a Government that will be peaceful with Israel, and that Gaza is a good chance to start. And I know that the Israeli Government wants to see that happen as well.

The world needs to help the Palestinians; the Arab neighbors need to help the Palestinians develop an economy. Now is the time for people to step up. It's an opportunity that was created by a bold decision, and I want to work together to see the vision of peace come to be.

So, Mr. Prime Minister, thank you for being here.

Prime Minister Sharon. Thank you, Mr. President. I'm glad to meet with you again, and I'm glad that we are working together in order to achieve peace in our region.

President Bush. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:22 a.m. at the United Nations Headquarters.

Remarks at the United Nations Security Council Summit in New York City
September 14, 2005

Thank you, Madam President. I appreciate all the members of the Security Council for participating in this summit. Our presence here reaffirms the seriousness of the challenges we face and our determined—determination to confront them.

We meet just over 2 months after the terror attacks in London, 1 year after the terrorist massacre of schoolchildren in Beslan, and 4 years after the terrorist attack in this city. Acts of terrorism like these emerge from a radical ideology that tolerates no dissent and justifies the murder of innocent people as the best way to achieve its goals.

Today we support a resolution sponsored by the United Kingdom that condemns the incitement of terrorist acts and calls on all states to take appropriate steps to end such incitement. I want to thank the Prime Minister and his government for their hard work on this issue. The United States of America strongly supports the implementation of this resolution.

We have a solemn obligation. We have a solemn obligation to stop terrorism in its early stages. We have a solemn obligation to defend our citizens against terrorism, to attack terrorist networks and deprive them of any safe haven, to promote an ideology of freedom and tolerance that will refute the dark vision of the terrorists.

We must do all we can to disrupt each stage of planning and support for terrorist acts. Each of us must act, consistent with past Security Council resolutions, to freeze terrorists' assets, to deny terrorists freedom

of movement by using effective border controls and secure travel documents, to prevent terrorists from acquiring weapons, including weapons of mass destruction. Each of us must act to share information to prevent a terrorist attacks before they happen. The United States will continue to work with and through the Security Council to help all nations meet these commitments.

The United States also reaffirms its commitment to support the prevention of unjust armed conflict, particularly in Africa, which is why we have joined Algeria, Benin, and Tanzania in cosponsoring today's second important resolution. We support the need to improve the ability of the African Union and subregional organizations to deploy both civilian and military assets to prevent such conflicts. Over the next 5 years, the United States will provide training for more than 40,000 African peacekeepers as part of a broader initiative by the G–8 countries. We will help train African forces to preserve justice and order in Africa.

Terrorism and armed conflict are not only threats to our security; they're the enemies of development and freedom for millions. To help ensure the 21st century is one of freedom, security, and prosperity—I want to thank the members of the Security Council for supporting today's resolutions.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:50 a.m. in the Security Council Chamber at the United Nations Headquarters. In his remarks, he referred to President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo of the Philippines, in her capacity as President to the U.N. Security Council; and Prime Minister Tony Blair of the United Kingdom.

Remarks at a Luncheon Hosted by Secretary-General Kofi Annan of the United Nations in New York City

September 14, 2005

Mr. Secretary-General, distinguished members of the United Nations community, Your Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen, our country is honored to welcome you to New York. I'm pleased to be with you at the 60th session of the United Nations General Assembly, this year under the leadership of President Eliasson of Sweden.

We meet at a time of tragedy for this country, when citizens along our gulf coast are recovering from Hurricane Katrina. I just want you to know that Americans take comfort in knowing that we're not alone. I can't thank you enough for the outpouring of international support for our brothers and sisters who hurt. This international good will and outpouring of support reminds us there is no challenge we cannot overcome when the nations of the world unite in common.

That was the vision of the founders of the United Nations six decades ago. Our challenge is to extend this vision into the 21st century, and we need a strong United Nations to do so. The United States appreciates the commitment of Secretary-General Annan and the General Assembly and members of member states to reform the U.N. We have made a solid start. More work remains.

Our ongoing efforts together will be crucial to enable the United Nations to fulfill the promises made 60 years ago.

Mr. Secretary-General, on this important anniversary I offer a toast to you and to the United Nations: May the U.N. embody the high ideals of its founding in the years to come.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:39 p.m. in the North Delegates Lounge at the United Nations Headquarters. In his remarks, he referred to Jan Eliasson, President of the 60th Session of the United Nations General Assembly.

Remarks at the National Dinner Celebrating 350 Years of Jewish Life in America

September 14, 2005

Thank you all very much. Thanks for the warm welcome. Thanks for the invitation to be here. My only regret is Laura is not with me. I left her behind to do some diplomacy in New York City. [*Laughter*]

Bob, I want to thank you for your kind introduction. I'm honored to accept this medal commemorating three-and-a-half centuries of Jewish life in America. I consider it a high honor to have been invited to celebrate with you.

Back in 1790, the Jewish congregation of Newport, Rhode Island, wrote to congratulate George Washington on his election as the country's first President. Some say he was the first George W. [*Laughter*] In his reply, President Washington thanked the congregation and pledged to defend vigorously the principle of religious liberty for all. He declared—here's what he said. He said, the United States "gives bigotry no sanction; to persecution, no assistance." And he expressed his hope that the "stock of Abraham" would thrive in America.

In the centuries that followed, the stock of Abraham has thrived here like nowhere else. We're better and stronger—and we're a better and stronger and freer nation because so many Jews from countries all over the world have chosen to become American citizens.

I want to thank Rabbi Gary Zola, who is the chairman of the Commission for Commemorating 350 Years of American Jewish History. I want to thank Ken Bialkin, who is the chairman of the board of the American Jewish Historical Society. I want to thank Members of Congress who are here. I want to thank members of the diplomatic corps, especially the Ambassador from Israel, Danny Ayalon.

I want to thank two members of my Cabinet who've joined us, Secretary Alphonso Jackson of the Department of Housing and Urban Affairs, and his wife, Marcia, and Josh Bolten, who is the Director of the Office of Management and Budget.

I appreciate the Archivist of the United States, who has joined us today, Allen Weinstein; Dr. Jim Billington, who is the Librarian of Congress.

I can't help but notice and welcome Ed Koch, the former mayor of New York City. I want to thank my friend Fred Zeidman from Houston, Texas, who's the Chairman of the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Council—pay my respects to Lynn Schusterman, who's the president of the Charles and Lynn Schusterman Family Foundation, and Sid Lapidus, who's the president of the American Jewish Historical Society.

This may sound a little odd for a Methodist from Texas saying this, but I just came from a shul. I was just given the grand tour of the great American landmark, the Sixth & I Historic Synagogue. I want to thank Shelton Zuckerman and Abe Pollin for taking it upon themselves to restore this important historical site. If you haven't been there, you ought to go. It is a—there's a wonderfully warm feeling. I saw the devotion that has gone into restoring this jewel, which was built nearly a century ago, a jewel that houses three Torah scrolls rescued from the Holocaust. We're proud to have this great synagogue in the heart of

our Nation's Capital, and we're glad a new generation is revitalizing this house of God.

The story of the Jewish people in America is a story of America itself. The pilgrims considered this Nation a new Israel, a refuge from persecution in Europe. Early Americans named many of their cities after places in Hebrew Scripture, Bethel and New Canaan, Shiloh and Salem. And when the first Jews arrived here, the children of Israel saw America as the land of promise, a golden land where they could practice their faith in freedom and live in liberty.

When the first Jewish settlers came to our shores 350 [years] * ago, they were not immediately welcomed. Yet from the onset, the Jews who arrived here demonstrated a deep commitment to their new land. An immigrant named Asser Levy volunteered to serve in the New Amsterdam citizens guard, which, unfortunately, had a policy of refusing to admit Jews. That didn't bother Levy. He was determined, like many others who have followed him, to break down the barriers of discrimination. Within 2 years, he took his rightful spot along [alongside] * his fellow citizens in the guard. He was the first of many Jewish Americans who have proudly worn the uniform of the United States.

And one of the greatest Jewish soldiers America has ever known is Tibor Rubin. After surviving the Holocaust and the Nazi death camp, this young man came to America. He enlisted in the United States Army and fought in the Korean war. He was severely wounded and was later captured by the enemy. For 2½ years, he survived in a POW camp. He risked his life for his fellow soldiers nearly every night by smuggling extra food for those who were ill—it was a skill he had learned in the Nazi camps—and because of his daring, as many as 40 American lives were saved.

This evening, I'm happy to announce that next week I will bestow upon this great patriot our Nation's highest award for bravery, the Medal of Honor.

Jewish Americans have made countless contributions to our land. The prophet Jeremiah once called out to this—to his Nation, "seek the welfare of the city where I have sent you into exile, and pray to the Lord on its behalf." For 350 years, American Jews have heeded these words, and you've prayed and worked for peace and freedom in America. Freedom to worship is why Jews came to America three-and-a-half centuries ago. It's why the Jews settled in Israel over five decades ago.

Our two nations have a lot in common, when you think about it. We were both founded by immigrants escaping religious persecution in other lands. We both have built vibrant democracies. Both our countries are founded on certain basic beliefs, that there is an Almighty God who watches over the affairs of men and values every life. These ties have made us natural allies, and these ties will never be broken.

Earlier today I met in New York with Prime Minister Sharon and the Ambassador. I admire Prime Minister Sharon. He's a man of courage. He's a man of peace. Once again, I expressed this Nation's commitment to defending the security and well-being of Israel. I also assured him that I will not waver when it comes to spreading freedom around the world. I understand this, that freedom is not America's gift to the world; freedom is an Almighty God's gift to each man and woman and child in this world.

Religious freedom is a foundation of fundamental human and civil rights. And when the United States promotes religious freedom, it is promoting the spread of democracy. And when we promote the spread of democracy, we are promoting the cause of peace.

Religious freedom is more than the freedom to practice one's faith. It is also the obligation to respect the faith of others. So to stand for religious freedom, we must expose and confront the ancient hatred of

* White House correction.

anti-Semitism, wherever it is found. When we find anti-Semitism at home, we will confront it. When we find anti-Semitism abroad, we will condemn it. And we condemn the desecration of synagogues in Gaza that followed Israel's withdrawal.

Under America's system of religious freedom, church and state are separate. Still, we have learned that faith is not solely a private matter. Men and women throughout our history have acted on the words of Scripture, and they have made America a better, more hopeful place. When Rabbi Abraham Heschel marched with Martin Luther King, we saw modern-day prophets calling on America to honor its promises. We must allow people of faith to act on their convictions without facing discrimination.

And that's why my administration has started a Faith-Based and Community Initiative, to call on the armies of compassion to help heal broken hearts. A few years ago in New York, the Metropolitan Council on Jewish Poverty was discouraged from even applying for Federal funds because it had the word "Jewish" in its name. We must end this kind of discrimination if we want America to be a hopeful place.

At this moment, volunteers from all walks of life, across our great land, are helping the good folks of Alabama and Mississippi and Louisiana recover from one of the worst natural disasters in our Nation's history. The outpouring of compassion is phenomenal. American Jewish organizations have already raised over $10 million, plus the $50,000 tonight, for the victims of Hurricane Katrina.

About half of the 10,000 Jewish Americans who call New Orleans home found refuge in Houston. Rabbi Barry Gelman of the United Orthodox Synagogues of Houston immediately helped organize a task force to aid the evacuees. Five major Israeli universities with study-abroad programs are opening their doors to college students whose schools have been shut down by the storm.

These are the good works of good people relying on the wisdom of the Good Book, a book that tells us how God rescued life from the flood waters. And like Noah and his family, we have faith that as the waters recede, we will see life begin again.

I want to thank you for your patriotism. I want to thank you for compassion. I want to thank you for your love for the United States of America. All of America is grateful to the Jewish people for the treasures you have given us over the past 350 years.

May God bless you, and may God continue to bless our country.

NOTE: The President spoke at 6:55 p.m. at the National Building Museum. In his remarks, he referred to Robert S. Rifkind, chairman of the governing board, Celebrate 350: Jewish Life in America, 1654–2004, who introduced the President; Gary Zola, chairman, Commission to Commemorate 350 Years of American Jewish History; Lynn Schusterman, co-founder, Charles and Lynn Schusterman Family Foundation; Shelton Zuckerman, vice president and secretary, and Abe Pollin, president, Sixth & I Historic Synagogue; and Prime Minister Ariel Sharon of Israel.

Message to the Congress Transmitting a Report of the Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission
September 15, 2005

To the Congress of the United States:

I transmit herewith the report containing the recommendations of the Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission pursuant to sections 2903 and 2914 of the Defense Base Closure and Realignment Act of 1990, Public Law 101–510, 104 Stat. 1810, as amended. That report includes changes referenced in errata sheets submitted to me by the Commission, including the enclosed errata sheets dated September 8, September 9, September 12, and September 13, 2005.

I note that I am in receipt of a letter from Chairman Principi, dated September 8, 2005, regarding a district court injunction then in effect relating to the Bradley International Airport Air Guard Station in Windsor Locks, Connecticut. Chairman Principi's letter states that, as a result of that injunction, "you should consider the portion of Recommendation 85 . . . that recommends realignment of the Connecticut 103rd Fighter Wing withdrawn from the Commission's report." The Chairman's letter further states that "[i]f the court's injunction is later vacated, reversed, stayed, or otherwise withdrawn, it is the intent of the Commission that the entirety of the recommendation be a part of the Commission's report." On September 9, 2005, the United States Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit granted a stay of the district court's injunction. Because the injunction is no longer in effect, Recommendation 85 in its entirety is part of the Commission's report.

I certify that I approve all the recommendations contained in the Commission's report.

GEORGE W. BUSH

The White House,
September 15, 2005.

Address to the Nation on Hurricane Katrina Recovery From New Orleans, Louisiana
September 15, 2005

Good evening. I'm speaking to you from the city of New Orleans, nearly empty, still partly under water, and waiting for life and hope to return. Eastward from Lake Pontchartrain, across the Mississippi coast to Alabama into Florida, millions of lives were changed in a day by a cruel and wasteful storm.

In the aftermath, we have seen fellow citizens left stunned and uprooted, searching for loved ones and grieving for the dead and looking for meaning in a tragedy that seems so blind and random. We've also witnessed the kind of desperation no citizen of this great and generous Nation should ever have to know, fellow Americans calling out for food and water, vulnerable people left at the mercy of criminals who had no mercy, and the bodies of the dead lying uncovered and untended in the street.

These days of sorrow and outrage have also been marked by acts of courage and kindness that make all Americans proud. Coast Guard and other personnel rescued tens of thousands of people from flooded neighborhoods. Religious congregations and

families have welcomed strangers as brothers and sisters and neighbors. In the community of Chalmette, when two men tried to break into a home, the owner invited them to stay and took in 15 other people who had no place to go. At Tulane Hospital for Children, doctors and nurses did not eat for days so patients could have food and eventually carried the patients on their backs up eight flights of stairs to helicopters.

Many first-responders were victims themselves, wounded healers with a sense of duty greater than their own suffering. When I met Steve Scott of the Biloxi Fire Department, he and his colleagues were conducting a house-to-house search for survivors. Steve told me this: "I lost my house, and I lost my cars, but I still got my family, and I still got my spirit."

Across the gulf coast, among people who have lost much and suffered much and given to the limit of their power, we are seeing that same spirit, a core of strength that survives all hurt, a faith in God no storm can take away, and a powerful American determination to clear the ruins and build better than before.

Tonight so many victims of the hurricane and the flood are far from home and friends and familiar things. You need to know that our whole Nation cares about you, and in the journey ahead, you're not alone. To all who carry a burden of loss, I extend the deepest sympathy of our country. To every person who has served and sacrificed in this emergency, I offer the gratitude of our country.

And tonight I also offer this pledge of the American people: Throughout the area hit by the hurricane, we will do what it takes; we will stay as long as it takes to help citizens rebuild their communities and their lives. And all who question the future of the Crescent City need to know there is no way to imagine America without New Orleans, and this great city will rise again.

The work of rescue is largely finished. The work of recovery is moving forward. In nearly all of Mississippi, electric power has been restored. Trade is starting to return to the Port of New Orleans, and agricultural shipments are moving down the Mississippi River. All major gasoline pipelines are now in operation, preventing the supply disruptions that many feared. The breaks in the levees have been closed. The pumps are running, and the water here in New Orleans is receding by the hour. Environmental officials are on the ground, taking water samples, identifying and dealing with hazardous debris, and working to get drinking water and waste water treatment systems operating again. And some very sad duties are being carried out by professionals who gather the dead, treat them with respect, and prepare them for their rest.

In the task of recovery and rebuilding, some of the hardest work is still ahead, and it will require the creative skill and generosity of a united country.

Our first commitment is to meet the immediate needs of those who had to flee their homes and leave all their possessions behind. For these Americans, every night brings uncertainty; every day requires new courage; and in the months to come will bring more than their fair share of struggles.

The Department of Homeland Security is registering evacuees who are now in shelters and churches or private homes, whether in the gulf region or far away. I have signed an order providing immediate assistance to people from the disaster area. As of today, more than 500,000 evacuee families have gotten emergency help to pay for food, clothing, and other essentials. Evacuees who have not yet registered should contact FEMA or the Red Cross. We need to know who you are, because many of you will be eligible for broader assistance in the future.

Many families were separated during the evacuation, and we are working to help you reunite. Please call this number: 1–877–568–3317—that's 1–877–568–3317—and we

will work to bring your family back together and pay for your travel to reach them. In addition, we're taking steps to ensure that evacuees do not have to travel great distances or navigate bureaucracies to get the benefits that are there for them.

The Department of Health and Human Services has sent more than 1,500 health professionals along with over 50 tons of medical supplies, including vaccines and antibiotics and medicines for people with chronic conditions such as diabetes. The Social Security Administration is delivering checks. The Department of Labor is helping displaced persons apply for temporary jobs and unemployment benefits. And the Postal Service is registering new addresses so that people can get their mail.

To carry out the first stages of the relief effort and begin rebuilding at once, I have asked for and the Congress has provided more than $60 billion. This is an unprecedented response to an unprecedented crisis, which demonstrates the compassion and resolve of our Nation.

Our second commitment is to help the citizens of the gulf coast to overcome this disaster, put their lives back together, and rebuild their communities. Along this coast, for mile after mile, the wind and water swept the land clean. In Mississippi, many thousands of houses were damaged or destroyed. In New Orleans and surrounding parishes, more than a quarter-million houses are no longer safe to live in. Hundreds of thousands of people from across this region will need to find longer term housing.

Our goal is to get people out of the shelters by the middle of October. So we're providing direct assistance to evacuees that allows them to rent apartments, and many are already moving into places of their own. A number of States have taken in evacuees and shown them great compassion, admitting children to school and providing health care. So I will work with the Congress to ensure that States are reimbursed for these extra expenses.

In the disaster area and in cities that have received huge numbers of displaced people, we're beginning to bring in mobile homes and trailers for temporary use. To relieve the burden on local health care facilities in the region, we're sending extra doctors and nurses to these areas. We're also providing money that can be used to cover overtime pay for police and fire departments, while the cities and towns rebuild.

Near New Orleans and Biloxi and other cities, housing is urgently needed for police and firefighters, other service providers, and the many workers who are going to rebuild these cities. Right now many are sleeping on ships we have brought to the Port of New Orleans, and more ships are on their way to the region. And we'll provide mobile homes and supply them with basic services as close to construction areas as possible, so the rebuilding process can go forward as quickly as possible.

And the Federal Government will undertake a close partnership with the States of Louisiana and Mississippi, the city of New Orleans and other gulf coast cities, so they can rebuild in a sensible, well-planned way. Federal funds will cover the great majority of the costs of repairing public infrastructure in the disaster zone, from roads and bridges to schools and water systems. Our goal is to get the work done quickly. And taxpayers expect this work to be done honestly and wisely, so we'll have a team of inspectors general reviewing all expenditures.

In the rebuilding process, there will be many important decisions and many details to resolve, yet we're moving forward according to some clear principles. The Federal Government will be fully engaged in the mission, but Governor Barbour, Governor Blanco, Mayor Nagin, and other State and local leaders will have the primary role in planning for their own future. Clearly, communities will need to move decisively to change zoning laws and building codes in order to avoid a repeat of what we've

seen. And in the work of rebuilding, as many jobs as possible should go to the men and women who live in Louisiana, Mississippi, and Alabama.

Our third commitment is this: When communities are rebuilt, they must be even better and stronger than before the storm. Within the gulf region are some of the most beautiful and historic places in America. As all of us saw on television, there's also some deep, persistent poverty in this region as well. That poverty has roots in a history of racial discrimination, which cut off generations from the opportunity of America. We have a duty to confront this poverty with bold action. So let us restore all that we have cherished from yesterday, and let us rise above the legacy of inequality. When the streets are rebuilt, there should be many new businesses, including minority-owned businesses, along those streets. When the houses are rebuilt, more families should own, not rent, those houses. When the regional economy revives, local people should be prepared for the jobs being created.

Americans want the gulf coast not just to survive but to thrive, not just to cope but to overcome. We want evacuees to come home for the best of reasons, because they have a real chance at a better life in a place they love.

When one resident of this city who lost his home was asked by a reporter if he would relocate, he said, "Naw, I will rebuild, but I will build higher." That is our vision for the future, in this city and beyond: We'll not just rebuild; we'll build higher and better. To meet this goal, I will listen to good ideas from Congress, and State and local officials, and the private sector. I believe we should start with three initiatives that the Congress should pass.

Tonight I propose the creation of a Gulf Opportunity Zone, encompassing the region of the disaster in Louisiana and Mississippi and Alabama. Within this zone, we should provide immediate incentives for job-creating investment, tax relief for small businesses, incentives to companies that create jobs, and loans and loan guarantees for small businesses, including minority-owned enterprises, to get them up and running again. It is entrepreneurship that creates jobs and opportunity. It is entrepreneurship that helps break the cycle of poverty, and we will take the side of entrepreneurs as they lead the economic revival of the gulf region.

I propose the creation of Worker Recovery Accounts to help those evacuees who need extra help finding work. Under this plan, the Federal Government would provide accounts of up to $5,000, which these evacuees could draw upon for job training and education to help them get a good job and for child care expenses during their job search.

And to help lower income citizens in the hurricane region build new and better lives, I also propose that Congress pass an urban homesteading act. Under this approach, we will identify property in the region owned by the Federal Government and provide building sites to low-income citizens free of charge, through a lottery. In return, they would pledge to build on the lot, with either a mortgage or help from a charitable organization like Habitat for Humanity. Homeownership is one of the great strengths of any community, and it must be a central part of our vision for the revival of this region.

In the long run, the New Orleans area has a particular challenge, because much of the city lies below sea level. The people who call it home need to have reassurance that their lives will be safer in the years to come. Protecting a city that sits lower than the water around it is not easy, but it can and has been done. City and parish officials in New Orleans and State officials in Louisiana will have a large part in the engineering decisions to come. And the Army Corps of Engineers will work at their side to make the flood protection system stronger than it has ever been.

The work that has begun in the gulf coast region will be one of the largest reconstruction efforts the world has ever seen. When that job is done, all Americans will have something to be very proud of, and all Americans are needed in this common effort. It is the armies of compassion, charities and houses of worship and idealistic men and women, that give our reconstruction effort its humanity. They offer to those who hurt a friendly face, an arm around the shoulder, and the reassurance that in hard times, they can count on someone who cares. By land, by sea, and by air, good people wanting to make a difference deployed to the gulf coast, and they've been working around the clock ever since.

The cash needed to support the armies of compassion is great, and Americans have given generously. For example, the private fundraising effort led by former Presidents Bush and Clinton has already received pledges of more than $100 million. Some of that money is going to the Governors to be used for immediate needs within their States. A portion will also be sent to local houses of worship to help reimburse them for the expense of helping others. This evening the need is still urgent, and I ask the American people to continue donating to the Salvation Army, the Red Cross, other good charities, and religious congregations in the region.

It's also essential for the many organizations of our country to reach out to your fellow citizens in the gulf area. So I've asked USA Freedom Corps to create an information clearinghouse, available at usafreedomcorps.gov, so that families anywhere in the country can find opportunities to help families in the region, or a school can support a school. And I challenge existing organizations, churches and Scout troops or labor union locals, to get in touch with their counterparts in Mississippi, Louisiana, or Alabama and learn what they can do to help. In this great national enterprise, important work can be done by everyone, and everyone should find their role and do their part.

The Government of this Nation will do its part as well. Our cities must have clear and up-to-date plans for responding to natural disasters and disease outbreaks or a terrorist attack, for evacuating large numbers of people in an emergency, and for providing the food and water and security they would need. In a time of terror threats and weapons of mass destruction, the danger to our citizens reaches much wider than a faultline or a flood plain. I consider detailed emergency planning to be a national security priority, and therefore, I've ordered the Department of Homeland Security to undertake an immediate review, in cooperation with local counterparts, of emergency plans in every major city in America.

I also want to know all the facts about the Government response to Hurricane Katrina. The storm involved a massive flood, a major supply and security operation, and an evacuation order affecting more than a million people. It was not a normal hurricane, and the normal disaster relief system was not equal to it. Many of the men and women of the Coast Guard, the Federal Emergency Management Agency, the United States military, the National Guard, Homeland Security, and State and local governments performed skillfully under the worst conditions. Yet the system, at every level of government, was not well-coordinated and was overwhelmed in the first few days. It is now clear that a challenge on this scale requires greater Federal authority and a broader role for the Armed Forces, the institution of our Government most capable of massive logistical operations on a moment's notice.

Four years after the frightening experience of September the 11th, Americans have every right to expect a more effective response in a time of emergency. When the Federal Government fails to meet such an obligation, I, as President, am responsible for the problem and for the solution.

So I've ordered every Cabinet Secretary to participate in a comprehensive review of the Government response to the hurricane. This Government will learn the lessons of Hurricane Katrina. We're going to review every action and make necessary changes so that we are better prepared for any challenge of nature or act of evil men that could threaten our people.

The United States Congress also has an important oversight function to perform. Congress is preparing an investigation, and I will work with members of both parties to make sure this effort is thorough.

In the life of this Nation, we have often been reminded that nature is an awesome force and that all life is fragile. We're the heirs of men and women who lived through those first terrible winters at Jamestown and Plymouth, who rebuilt Chicago after a great fire and San Francisco after a great earthquake, who reclaimed the prairie from the Dust Bowl of the 1930s. Every time, the people of this land have come back from fire, flood, and storm to build anew and to build better than what we had before. Americans have never left our destiny to the whims of nature, and we will not start now.

These trials have also reminded us that we are often stronger than we know—with the help of grace and one another. They remind us of a hope beyond all pain and death, a God who welcomes the lost to a house not made with hands. And they remind us that we're tied together in this life, in this Nation, and that the despair of any touches us all.

I know that when you sit on the steps of a porch where a home once stood or sleep on a cot in a crowded shelter, it is hard to imagine a bright future. But that future will come. The streets of Biloxi and Gulfport will again be filled with lovely homes and the sound of children playing. The churches of Alabama will have their broken steeples mended and their congregations whole. And here in New Orleans, the streetcars will once again rumble down St. Charles, and the passionate soul of a great city will return.

In this place, there's a custom for the funerals of jazz musicians. The funeral procession parades slowly through the streets, followed by a band playing a mournful dirge as it moves to the cemetery. Once the casket has been laid in place, the band breaks into a joyful "second line," symbolizing the triumph of the spirit over death. Tonight the gulf coast is still coming through the dirge, yet we will live to see the second line.

Thank you, and may God bless America.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8:02 p.m. at Jackson Square. In his remarks, he referred to Gov. Haley Barbour of Mississippi; Gov. Kathleen Babineaux Blanco of Louisiana; and Mayor C. Ray Nagin of New Orleans, LA. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of this address.

Remarks at the National Day of Prayer and Remembrance Service
September 16, 2005

On this Day of Prayer and Remembrance, our Nation remains in the shadow of a storm that departed 2 weeks ago. We're humbled by the vast and indifferent might of nature and feel small beside its power. We commend the departed to God. We mourn with those who mourn, and we ask for strength in the work ahead.

The destruction is immense, covering a city, a coastline, a region. Yet the hurt always comes down to one life, one family.

We've seen the panic of loved ones separated from each other, the lonely pain of people whose earthly possessions were swept away, and the uncertainty of men and women and children driven away from the lives they knew. Many did not survive the fury of the storm. Many who did ask, "Why?" and wonder, "What comes next?"

In this hour of suffering, we're prayerful. In a wounded region, so many place their faith in a God who hears and helps. And so many are bringing their grief to a Savior acquainted with grief. Our Nation joins with them to pray for comfort and sorrow, for the reunion of separated families, and a holy rest for the ones who died.

Through prayer, we look for ways to understand the arbitrary harm left by this storm and the mystery of undeserved suffering. And in our search, we're reminded that God's purposes are sometimes impossible to know here on Earth. Yet even as we're humbled by forces we cannot explain, we take comfort in the knowledge that no one is ever stranded beyond God's care. The Creator of wind and water is also the source of even a greater power, a love that can redeem the worst tragedy, a love that is stronger than death.

In this hour of suffering, our Nation is thankful. We have been inspired by acts of courage and goodness: Coastguardsmen and military personnel reaching out of helicopters and lifting victims from rooftops; firefighters wading through mud and debris to search for victims and survivors; doctors and nurses defying danger so their patients might live. Many of those who saved others lost their own homes and were separated from their own families. And many stories of heroism and rescue will never be told because they are known to God alone.

We're thankful for a spirit, seen across the gulf coast, that faces the worst and chooses to hope. We're thankful as well for the many ordinary citizens who heard the cries of neighbors and answered them. Across the country, Americans saw the hungry and gave them something to eat, saw the thirsty and gave them something to drink, saw strangers and invited them in. One man who was rescued and given shelter after the storm said, "I didn't think there was so much love in the world."

In this hour of suffering, our Nation is also mindful of the work ahead. Through this tragedy, great duties have come to our Nation. The destruction of this hurricane was beyond any human power to control, but the restoration of broken communities and disrupted lives now rests in our hands. And we accept this responsibility not as a burden or a chore but as an opportunity to serve our fellow Americans, as they would do for us.

This task will measure our unity as a people. Americans of every race and religion were touched by this storm, yet some of the greatest hardship fell upon citizens already facing lives of struggle, the elderly, the vulnerable, and the poor. And this poverty has roots in generations of segregation and discrimination that closed many doors of opportunity. As we clear away the debris of a hurricane, let us also clear away the legacy of inequality. Let us deliver new hope to communities that were suffering before the storm. As we rebuild homes and businesses, we will renew our promise as a land of equality and decency. And one day, Americans will look back at the response to Hurricane Katrina and say that our country grew not only in prosperity but in character and justice.

On this National Day of Prayer and Remembrance, we pledge ourselves to the demanding work of revival and renew the faith and hope that will carry that work to completion. In the worst of storms and in the rush of flood waters, even the strongest faith can be tested. Yet the Scriptures assure us, "Many waters cannot quench love; neither can the floods drown it."

So now we go forward, confident in the good heart of America and trusting that even among the ruins, the love of God remains at work.

May God bless and keep the souls of the lost. May His love touch all those in need, and may He always watch over the United States of America. God bless.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:58 a.m. at the Washington National Cathedral. The National Day of Payer and Remembrance proclamation of September 8 is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

The President's News Conference With President Vladimir Putin of Russia
September 16, 2005

President Bush. Thank you all. Please be seated. I'm pleased to welcome my friend Vladimir Putin back to the White House. We just had a constructive meeting and a candid conversation. I told the President how much I enjoyed visiting Russia early this year and how much I'm looking forward to going back to Russia for the G–8.

I also thanked President Putin—Vladimir—for Russia's offers of assistance in the wake of Hurricane Katrina. It meant a lot to know that you cared enough to send critical supplies, and our country really appreciates it. People are going through some tough times down there, and I think it lifts their spirits to know that not only Americans but Russians care about their future.

We've got a strong ally in Russia in fighting the war on terror. You know, it was about 4 years ago that our country got attacked; 1 year ago, there was Beslan, both of them brutal attacks, both of them attacks by people who have no regard for innocent life. And we understand we have a duty to protect our citizens and to work together and to do everything we can to stop the killing. That's why we hold office.

And I appreciate you very much and your understanding of this war on terror. We also understand that we've got to work to stop the spread of weapons of mass destruction. We understand the stakes, that people who kill in cold blood, if they have weapons of mass destruction, will kill in cold blood on a massive scale. And I want to appreciate you for your understanding and thank you for your understanding of that.

We both signed the International Convention on the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism, which was a positive statement by the world. We discussed our efforts to work together in Iran and North Korea. We both—we have the same goal. We don't want the Iranians to have nuclear weapons, and we don't want the North Koreans to have nuclear weapons. We talked about ways to achieve those goals.

We talked about the need to improve nuclear security. This year we reached a milestone in nonproliferation cooperation by completing the conversion of 10,000 Russian nuclear warheads into peaceful fuel for U.S. power reactors. And I appreciate very much that sense of cooperation. That's good for the world to see.

We talked about our economic relationship. Russia has got a growing economy. We have products that they want, and they've got products that we want, like energy. And it's necessary for us to have a good economic relationship, one where we resolve our differences in a wise way. I told Vladimir that I'm very interested in seeing if we can't get—complete the negotiations for Russia's entry into the WTO, the World Trade Organization, by the end of this year.

As we strengthen our economic ties, we'll work to advance freedom and democracy in our respective countries and around the world. Russia has been a strong partner of the United States and will be even a

stronger partner as the reforms that President Vladimir Putin has talked about are implemented, rule of law and the ability for people to express themselves in an open way in Russia.

I don't know how many visits we've had. I haven't been counting them because I've run out of fingers on my hands, but there's been a lot. And every time I visit and talk with President Putin, I—our relationship becomes stronger. And I want to thank you for that. Thank you for coming to the White House to visit.

Welcome.

President Putin. Thank you very much. Distinguished ladies and gentlemen, first and foremost, I'd like to thank the President for invitation to visit the White House. And at the outset, allow me to relate the words of most sincere compassion and support to the American people with regards to the strikes of Mother Nature, that's Katrine Hurricane, which caused the death of many human lives and caused serious destruction. Believe us, we are sincerely and genuinely having the feeling of compassion with that tragedy, with you.

Russia, in the very first hours after the tragedy, proposed its support. Of course, this aid is in no comparison with the scale—the plan which was laid down yesterday by the President of U.S. to restore that part of the country. But that was sincere support, and we wanted to shore up morally the people which they currently need most—that's medications. That's the first need objects. And I must say, these events, to the entire world, have become a serious lesson not only for the U.S. It's not an accident that we have paid a lot of attention today and while we had meetings in New York, since it's a global catastrophe—global, absolutely global catastrophe, which must make us think.

And today I told it to George, to ourselves in Russia, we too will draw our conclusions regarding organization of activities of services related to averting such catastrophes with efficient response to the similar catastrophes which are, indeed, of a global nature. This is precisely why we've discussed these tragic events and our cooperation as regards averting of this—[*inaudible*]—catastrophes, infectious disease, and so forth. I'm sure if we pool our effort, then our activities will become more efficient.

In general, the qualitative new level of interaction between our two countries allows to efficiently address these breakthrough strategic tasks in many spheres of our interaction. And today's meeting was another confirmation of that. The traditional, high priority subjects of our interaction is antiterrorist cooperation of U.S. and Russia. We have agreed to enhance the bilateral coordination, including on the level of the working group to combat terrorism.

Hereby, we believe that special attention should be paid to a joint effort to avert terrorist activities, generally and, of course, with the possible use by terrorists of weapons of mass destruction. You know that a relevant decision has been adopted in New York, in the United Nations organization.

Significant attention was paid to the subject of nonproliferation, and here we have discussed the North Korean problem and the Iranian nuclear dossier. And I must say that our positions are very close with the American partners here. We will continue to coordinate our work. On our part, I'd like to point out that the potential of diplomatic solutions to all these questions is far from being exhausted, and we'll undertake all the steps necessary to settle all these problems and issues, not to aggravate them, not to bring them to extremalities.

We have in detail discussed other crisis-related situations in the world, and I must say that on all these issues, our foreign policy agencies are in touch constantly.

We have discussed also the upcoming meeting of G–8 group, and I'm thankful to George for some of his recommendations. We will continue with our partners

to be in touch, closely coordinating preparation of this event and working out the agenda, so that the meeting of G–8 in the Russian Federation be organized at high-level quality but also would take the torch and uphold it and also bring some fresh breath as regards the relevance of all the subjects as they are considered by our countries and the entire world.

We also discussed today the situation of the post-Soviet Union space. Our countries have joint interests in maintaining stability and economic prosperity of this vast territory. The position of Russia is well known. We come out for the consistent advancement of integrational process within the frameworks of this community of independent states, with straight respect to sovereignty of all our neighbors, their own right, without pressure from outside, to choose their mode of national development. And we will coordinate our activities with all our partners on that one.

In the course of negotiations, we have also assessed the course of fulfillment of all—of instructions given on Russia-U.S. relations, and I'd like to point out the economic ties and this development President just mentioned, the fact that we have a mutual interest towards each other, including as regards the growing Russia economy and in the sector of energy. We have discussed that in detail.

Basically, this is always the subject of our bilateral meetings. We have vast reserves to further develop our economic interaction, and first and foremost, as regards energy dialog, high technologies, space research, and you know that over the past years, a lot has been done both by U.S. and the Russian Federation in this area jointly.

We have discussed the possibility of accession of WTO by Russia. We discussed that in further detail, and I'm very thankful to the President of the U.S. for understanding of our interests during the negotiation process. And I hope that at the expert level, too, our specialists will be able to ultimately find some practical solutions, even if the questions they have to coordinate are quite a few. But the positive dynamics is there, and I would like to express the hope that it will result in specific outcomes.

And in conclusion, I'd like to underscore one more time that we are convinced with the President that the firm basis of the Russia-U.S. partnership should be based on the broad ties of our societies, citizens, civil societies. And after this meeting in the White House, we will have a chance to talk with the leaders of the American companies. And I hope that those meetings will also be of help and be useful, since we will discuss specific projects of participation of major U.S. companies in the Russian economy, first and foremost, in the energy sphere.

And I'd like to thank, one more time, the U.S. President that even if very difficult situation is known right now, where Mother Nature has revealed itself, well, he has found it possible to materialize our agreements and this meeting has occurred, even if it was clear that constantly with his mind, he is out there with his thoughts, with those people, with those problems. But still, it was possible to run through the entire agenda. We have discussed all the questions there. We have agreed on the immediate steps in future, as regards to interaction between U.S. and Russian Federation. And I hope this will be a good impulse for our cooperation in all those spheres I have just enumerated.

Thank you very much.

President Bush. We'll take two questions a side, starting with Terry [Terence Hunt, Associated Press].

Hurricane Katrina Recovery/National Debt

Q. Mr. President, with billions of dollars flowing out of Washington for hurricane relief, some Republicans are worried that you're writing a blank check that will have to be paid by future generations. Who is

going to have to pay for this recovery, and what's it going to do to the national debt?

President Bush. First of all, for our citizens who haven't seen what I've seen—you've seen what I've seen—it's—we lost a lot of life and a lot of property. I mean, the area destroyed by the storm is the size of Great Britain. And we've got whole towns just completely flattened, just wiped out. And one of our great cities, New Orleans, is—a lot of it is underwater. And by "underwater," I mean water over the rooftops. And those homes will be destroyed. Thousands of people won't have homes. And so this is an enormous task to help the region start growing again.

One of the commitments that I made last night is for the Federal Government to fund a significant portion of the infrastructure repair and rebuilding, in other words, our bridges and our roads, our schools. The water systems are ruined. The sewer system is ruined. And I meant that when I said we will do that. Part of the recovery is to make sure there's an infrastructure that works.

Yesterday in New Orleans, for example, the mayor was so thrilled that a portion of New Orleans, the French Quarter, for example, has got lights and sewers—you can't drink the water, but the sewer system works. In other words, he's beginning to see some life. And it just reminded me that as we can get the infrastructure up and running as quickly as possible, get the debris cleared, get the infrastructure up and running, then life will begin.

And so, you bet, it's going to cost money. But I'm confident we can handle it, and I'm confident we can handle our other priorities. It's going to mean that we're going to have to make sure we cut unnecessary spending. It's going to mean we don't do—we've got to maintain economic growth, and therefore, we should not raise taxes. Our working people have had to pay a tax, in essence, by higher gasoline prices. And we don't need to be taking more money out of their pocket. And as we spend the money, we got to make sure we spend it wisely. And so we're going to have inspectors general overseeing the expenditure of the money.

Our OMB will work with Congress to figure out where we need to offset when we need to offset, so that we can manage not only to maintain economic growth and vitality but to be able to spend that which is necessary to help this region get back on its feet. So it's a big role for the Federal Government.

There's a big role for private sector. And that's why I call for economic growth zones, an economic enterprise zone. Look, there's not going to be any revenues coming out of that area for a while anyway, so we might as well give them good tax relief in order to get jobs there and investment there. It makes sense. The entrepreneurial spirit is what's going to help lift this part of the world up. So we've got a—I started laying out the outlines of a plan, and it's one that we want to work with Congress on.

Q. What will it cost?

President Bush. Well, it's going to cost whatever it costs. We're going to be wise about the money we spend. I mean, you're—we haven't totaled up all the bridges and highways, but I said we'll make a commitment to rebuild the infrastructure and—to help rebuild the infrastructure. We're also spending money on—$2,000 a family to help these people get back on their feet. There's a variety of programs. The key question is to make sure the costs are wisely spent and that we work with Congress to make sure that we are able to manage our budget in a wise way. And that is going to mean cutting other programs.

Do you want to call on somebody?

Russia-U.S. Relations

Q. The Russian-U.S. relationship largely is based on your good personal relations. In year 2008, you both will cease to be Presidents. So have you laid any guarantees

so that U.S.-Russia relationship could go on not worse than it does right now?

President Bush. That's a good question.

President Putin. Are they already firing us? We still want to work. [*Laughter*] To be serious, well, I might say that guarantees of the positive development of the U.S.-Russia relations are based on the mutual interests to develop such relations between the two countries. With their steps, leaders can either help such an objective processes of development or be an impediment. We try to do whatever it takes to support this process. So far, we are responsible and will continue to do so.

President Bush. For example, we will leave behind some legacies: the Moscow Treaty, which commits both countries to reducing our nuclear warheads; trade. In other words, as our countries and different companies begin to invest—companies begin to invest in both countries, that leaves behind a legacy that will be hard for future governments to undo. There's kind of a strategic dialog. We get in habits sometimes, and the idea of setting a way for governments to talk to each other at different levels of government is a good legacy.

And so, we do have 3 more years, which I found out is a long period of time. And we'll be able to do more together that people—that future governments will view as a way to move forward to keep the peace and to be—to deal with big issues in a complex world.

Steve [Steve Holland, Reuters].

Response to Future U.S. Disasters/Iran

Q. Last night you said that greater Federal involvement and troops may be required in future disasters. Could you elaborate on that a little bit? And were you able to convince President Putin on the need to send Iran to the Security Council? Sorry to do a two-part.

President Bush. No, that's—hit me with a two-part question.

First, on Iran, we agree that the Iranians should not have a nuclear weapon. That's important for people to understand. When you share the same goal, it means, as you work diplomatically, you're working toward that goal.

Secondly, I am confident that the world will see to it that Iran goes to the U.N. Security Council if it does not live up to its agreements. And when that referral will happen is a matter of diplomacy. And that's what we talked about. We talked about how to deal with this situation diplomatically.

The first part of the question—oh, was how to deal with disasters.

Q. Federal involvement in disasters.

President Bush. Yes. I don't want to prejudge the commission's—what do they call it, the bipartisan commission that is set up in Congress. I don't want to prejudge their findings. But I do think they ought to seriously consider the fact that there are—a storm, for example, of a certain category, which will require an overwhelming response by Government that can only be provided by, say, the United States military through NORTHCOM, because of its ability to muster logistical—logistics and supplies so quickly. And that's what I want Congress to consider, and I think it's very important that Congress consider this.

It's important for us to learn from the storm what could have been done better, for example, and apply that to other types of situations, such as a pandemic. At the U.N., I talked about avian flu; we need to take it seriously. I talked to Vladimir about avian flu; I talked to other world leaders about the potential outbreak of avian flu. If avian flu were to hit this country, do we have the proper response mechanisms? Does the Federal Government have the authorities necessary to make certain decisions? And this storm will give us an opportunity to review all different types of circumstance to make sure that the President has the capacity to react. And that's what I was referring to. I wasn't

drawing any conclusions; I was just suggesting that this be a matter of debate and discussion with the bipartisan commission that is going to be set up there, with Democrats and Republican Senators and Congressmen.

President Putin. As regards to the Iranian subject, I might as well say that the our position is very clear and understandable. We support all of the agreements on nonproliferation, which includes Iran among others, fully, and we've always, in this regard, been open with our partners, transparent completely. And yesterday in the meeting with the President of Iran, we directly told him so. And of course, we are against the fact that Iran would become a nuclear power, and we'll continue to do so in future under any circumstances.

Now, as regards as to how we can control the situation, there are many ways and means to do so. We wouldn't like our—inaccurate steps could bring us to the situation similar to that one in the Korean Peninsula. We're in touch with all the partners in the process—with the European–3, with the U.S. We have understanding of what we need to do, and I hope that our activities will be coordinated and will bring positive results.

Once again, yesterday I heard from the Iranian leader, a statement that Iran does not seek to acquire nuclear weapons. That's the first thing I wanted to share with you.

Now—and if you allow me, today, this way or the other, still we'll come back—and for quite a while, I guess, in future, too—to the fact of this horrible catastrophe, which was passed on to the soil of the U.S., having to do with this Hurricane Katrine. If, George, you don't mind, I would come back to this first question, which relates to the fact that we are taking away money from the future generation pockets. In the Soviet Union, for many decades, we lived under the motto: We need to think about the future generation. But we never thought about the existing, current, present generations. And at the end of the day, we have destroyed the country, not thinking about the people living today.

Therefore, of course, yes, we need to spend money. There is no two ways about it. And I believe that both U.S. and we in Russia and in other countries of the world, we've been analyzing, all of us, what has transpired, how the state and the bodies responded to the current events. Many of us will draw their conclusions as regards restructuring the activities of the relevant services and bodies of the state which ought to minimize the repercussions of such catastrophes.

President Bush. Final question.

Emerging Democracies

Q. The question to Mr. President of the U.S. Mr. President, while talking in the United Nations organization, you, probably conscientiously in a row—talking about the strive for the road to democracy—mentioned such countries as Afghanistan, Iran, Georgia, Ukraine, and Iraq. Do you believe the situation politically in this country is similar?

And to you, Mr. President, since we're talking about it, what is your assessment in Iraq and in Ukraine, please? Thank you.

President Bush. Let me make sure I understand your question. Do I believe the country in—the situation in our country is similar to their countries?

Q. You spoke at the United Nations about the strive for democracy——

President Bush. Right.

Q. ——and you——

President Bush. I remember that.

Q. And you mentioned Georgia, Ukraine, Iraq, Afghanistan—just do you think the situation in these countries is similar?

President Bush. Oh. Well, no, I think they're all different. I think, as a matter of fact, democracy tends to reflect the cultures and histories of each different country. I do think, though, they're bound by some common principles, one, that governments that are elected by the people tend to respond to the people, that they've got

minority rights and rule of law. But they're all on different stages of the development of democracy.

Democracy just doesn't happen. It grows. It takes a while. It's the experience of our country. It's the experience of the Russian Federation. I mean, democracies take on the customs and habits of the particular people, and they mature. And so they're at different stages. I mean, clearly, Iraq is a struggling democracy. But one thing is for certain: The people have made their mind about what they want. They want democracy: 8.5 million Iraqis went to the polls, see, and they've got a constitution that's been written. It wasn't written under bayonet or under the barrel of a gun. It was written by people from different factions of the society that have come together. And it will be voted on soon. And then there will be another election. So this is an emerging democracy, and it's different from a more mature democracy.

Q. Can I follow up?

President Bush. No. [*Laughter*] Got to keep order and discipline. Right, Steve?

President Putin. On the last question about Iraq and Ukraine—Iraq, we are aware of the situation in Iraq. Unfortunately, we are facing constant violence, and that relates to known factors having to do with the upcoming referendum on constitution there. I believe that if it will be possible to get constitution, this will be a good, strong step forward to achieve stability in that country.

In my opinion, it will be only possible if the main political forces, ethnic groups, will get a sense that it's their own constitution. If this document will be confirmed, agreed upon by the overwhelming segments of the population, if the current leadership makes a strong case and convinces population that this constitution is satisfactory to all, it will maintain territorial integrity, will take into account the interests of major minority groups, then it will be a real step forward in settlement. And we hope very much that will occur.

Now, as regards Ukraine, well, what can be said here? The political crisis, as I said recently in Berlin, the situation is under control of the President.

President Bush. Good job. Thank you. Good job.

NOTE: The President's news conference began at 2:59 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Mayor C. Ray Nagin of New Orleans, LA. President Putin referred to President Mahmud Ahmadi-nejad of Iran; and President Viktor Yushchenko of Ukraine. President Putin and some reporters spoke in Russian, and their remarks were translated by an interpreter. A portion of this news conference could not be verified because the tape was incomplete.

The President's Radio Address
September 17, 2005

Good morning. This week I visited Mississippi and Louisiana and reported to the Nation on our strategy to help our neighbors in these devastated areas recover and rebuild. In the aftermath of Katrina, we have seen our fellow citizens uprooted from their homes, searching for loved ones, and grieving for the dead. These scenes have touched our hearts and moved our whole Nation to action. And the outpouring of compassion has sent a clear message to the victims of this storm: Our whole Nation cares about you; you are not alone.

The recovery of the gulf coast region will be one of the largest reconstruction efforts the world has ever seen. And I have made

a pledge of the American people: Throughout the area hit by the hurricane, we will help our citizens rebuild their communities and their lives.

Our strategy rests on three commitments. Our first commitment is to meet the immediate needs of those who had to flee their homes and leave all their possessions behind. As of this week, more than 500,000 evacuee families have gotten emergency help to pay for food, clothing, and other essentials, and they will receive broader help in the future. I've asked for and the Congress has provided more than $60 billion, an unprecedented response to an unprecedented crisis.

Our second commitment is to help the citizens of the gulf coast put their lives back together and rebuild their communities. Our goal is to get people out of shelters by the middle of October. So we're providing direct assistance to evacuees that will allow them to rent apartments, and we're beginning to bring in mobile homes and trailers for temporary use in affected areas. We will also help provide housing for the many workers who will rebuild cities in the region so that reconstruction can move forward quickly.

To relieve the burden on local health care facilities in the disaster areas, we're sending extra doctors and nurses and setting up well-supplied temporary community health centers. A number of States have taken in evacuees and shown them great compassion, admitting children to school and providing health care. So I'll work with Congress to ensure the States are reimbursed for these extra expenses.

Our third commitment is to ensure that the communities we rebuild emerge better and stronger. Out of this tragedy comes an opportunity to harness the good and gracious spirit of America and deliver new hope to neighborhoods that were suffering before the storm. Our reconstruction efforts will be guided by certain principles: When cities are rebuilt, those cities should have many new businesses, including minority-owned businesses. When houses are rebuilt, more families should own, not rent, those houses.

To achieve these aims I've proposed the creation of a Gulf Opportunity Zone in the disaster area, with immediate tax relief and other incentives for job-creating investment. And to encourage homeownership, I have proposed a new urban homesteading act, which would identify property in the region owned by the Federal Government and provide lots to low-income citizens free of charge, through a lottery. In return, they would pledge to build on the lot with either a mortgage or help from a charitable organization like Habitat for Humanity.

As we rebuild homes and businesses, we will renew our promise to be the land of equality and decency. And one day, Americans will look back at the response to Hurricane Katrina and say that our country grew not only in prosperity but also in character and justice.

Our citizens have responded to this tragedy with action and prayer. We ask God's comfort for the men and women who have suffered so much. We pray that the missing find safe return and those who were lost find holy rest. And we sought the strength of the Almighty for the difficult work that lies ahead.

In the life of our Nation, we have seen that wondrous things are possible when we act with God's grace. From the rubble of destroyed homes, we can see the beginnings of vibrant new neighborhoods. From the despair of lives torn asunder, we can see the hope of rebirth. And from the depth of darkness, we can see a bright dawn emerging over the gulf coast and the great city of New Orleans.

Thank you for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 7:50 a.m. on September 16 in the Cabinet Room at the White House for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on September 17. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary

on September 16 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 Parliamentary Elections in Afghanistan
September 18, 2005

I congratulate the Afghan people and Afghan Government for today's successful parliamentary elections, which are a major step forward in Afghanistan's development as a democratic state governed by the rule of law. Braving deadly attacks and threats of violence, Afghans voted in large numbers for representatives to their new National Assembly and Provincial Councils. We commend the tremendous progress that the Afghan people have made in recent years, and we pledge the full support of the United States as Afghanistan acts to meet the new challenges ahead.

Remarks Prior to a Meeting With the Homeland Security Council and an Exchange With Reporters
September 19, 2005

The President. I just met with my Homeland Security Council to discuss ongoing relief efforts in the areas affected by Hurricane Katrina. I have made it clear that I believe it's a national security matter for people to review emergency plans. And so therefore, I've instructed Secretary Chertoff and folks around this table to work with our local counterparts to make sure that we've got emergency plans in place that will deal with significant disaster. And for the local folks, I urge them to cooperate in a review of these plans. It's important.

Secondly, one of the things that I heard loud and clear on my travels down there was that people are concerned about redtape. And one of the big concerns for the mayors and the Governor of Mississippi, in particular, and the mayors along the gulf coast, was this issue about debris removal—who's responsible, how can we get it done in an effective way. And I want to thank the Secretary for working with Governor Barbour on this issue to expedite a process by which we can start getting some of this debris removed from a part of our country that was just wiped out by this storm; I mean, there are piles and piles of homes and buildings just in rubble. And in order to help this region get rebuilt, first things first, and that's to get rid of the debris. And so we've got a plan in place to cut through the redtape and get this done in an effective way.

On another matter, a couple of other matters—one, I want to congratulate the people of Afghanistan for showing up at the polls and defying the Taliban and those who threaten their lives and say, look, you know, these people supported democracy. It's just another step on their road toward a stable democracy, and we congratulate them.

And as well, I want to welcome the comments of the OPEC and non-OPEC nations, talking about making sure they get enough supply on the markets to help, hopefully, affect the world price of crude oil. I have been concerned about the price at the pump that our folks are paying. Part

of that was caused by the disruptions of Hurricane Katrina. We dealt with that by suspending rules and regulations that enable us to import more gasoline. But part of the cost of gasoline is a result of high crude oil prices, and one way to affect those prices is to conserve, and the other way is to encourage an increased supply. And so I want to thank those countries that are trying to figure out how to get more supply on the market to help relieve some of the pressure.

Be glad to answer some questions. Jennifer [Jennifer Loven, Associated Press] and Adam [Adam Entous, Reuters] will be asking questions today.

New Orleans

Q. Thank you, sir. Thank you. Mayor Nagin in New Orleans has invited people to start returning to that city when there are lots of Federal officials who feel that it's not safe to do so. Do you feel like you need to step in?

The President. Well, we have made our position very clear. Admiral Allen has made the position very clear, of this Government, and that is that we share the goal of the mayor, but we have got concerns. There are environmental concerns, which Administrator Johnson shared with us today.

Let me give you a real concern that I think everybody ought to pay attention to, and that is this Tropical Storm Rita, which now looks like it's going to head out into the gulf and could track Katrina, or it could head further to the west. But nevertheless, there is deep concern about this storm causing more flooding in New Orleans.

And so Admiral Allen has reflected our—the concerns of this administration. And we want to work with the mayor. The mayor is working hard. The mayor has got this dream about having a city up and running, and we share that dream. But we also want to be realistic about some of the hurdles and obstacles that we all confront in repopulating New Orleans.

Q. Will you express that concern yourself to the mayor?

The President. Well, I just did, but, as well—absolutely. Secretary—"Secretary," I call Andy Card—former Secretary and now Chief of Staff Card is reaching out to him—has reached out to him earlier. But listen, Admiral Allen is our man on the ground. Admiral Allen speaks for the administration. He is—and the mayor knows our position. But I repeat, and the mayor needs to hear it, and so do the people of New Orleans, our objective—listen, I went there and stood in Jackson Square to say, we want this city to reemerge. As I said, I can't imagine America without a vibrant New Orleans. It's just a matter of timing, and there's issues to be dealt with. If it were to rain a lot, there is concern from the Army Corps of Engineers that the levees might break. And so therefore, we're cautious about encouraging people to return at this moment of history.

Adam.

North Korea

Q. Thank you, Mr. President. Given what you've said in the past about North Korea's record of noncompliance, what makes you think that this time North Korea will abandon its pursuit of nuclear weapons?

The President. Five nations, in working with North Korea, have come up with a formula which we all hope works. Five nations have spoken and said it is not in the world's interest that North Korea have a nuclear weapon. And now there's a way forward. And part of the way forward is for the North Koreans to understand that we're serious about this and that we expect there to be a verifiable process. In other words, they have said, in principle, that they will abandon their weapons programs. And what we have said is, "Great, that's a wonderful step forward, but now we've got to verify whether or not that happens."

It was a positive step yesterday. It was a step forward in making this world a more secure place. And I want to thank our other

partners in the six-party dialog, you know, by working together. The question is, over time, will all parties adhere to the agreement?

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:25 a.m. in the Cabinet Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Gov. Haley Barbour of Mississippi; Vice Adm. Thad W. Allen, USCG, U.S. Coast Guard Chief of Staff; and Mayor C. Ray Nagin of New Orleans, LA.

Remarks Following Discussions With Prime Minister Thaksin Chinnawat of Thailand

September 19, 2005

President Bush. It's been my honor to welcome the Prime Minister of Thailand back to the—to Washington. Thank you for coming, Mr. Prime Minister.

Prime Minister Thaksin. Thank you.

President Bush. Laura and I were just talking the other evening about what a wonderful visit we had to your country when you hosted APEC. It's reminded me—when I was thinking about that visit, reminded me of our close friendship. The Prime Minister is a person who believes in markets and free enterprise and freedom. And I'm really, really pleased he's here.

We had a—we talked about a lot of subjects. One subject that I'm particularly interested in is avian flu and the need for our countries to work together. Thailand is a leader in putting systems in place that will track the virus as it attacks different birds and watches very carefully to make sure that there's no bird-to-human transmission in his country. He's willing to work in the neighborhood, for which I'm grateful. All of us need to be mindful of this potentially devastating disease. And we've got a good friend and a very thoughtful leader when it comes to that subject.

We talked about North Korea. We talked about the neighborhood. We talked about our economies. We would like to get a free trade agreement concluded here as quickly as possible, and the Prime Minister made that very clear to me.

All in all, it was a very good visit, covering a lot of subjects, and I'm not surprised, because I'm visiting with a good friend.

So, welcome, Mr. Prime Minister.

Prime Minister Thaksin. Thank you, Mr. President. It's my pleasure to visit Washington, DC, again. It's my third time during Prime Ministership, and this trip I have been—discussed with the President about the bilateral and also the regional—in Asia as well. And we had a very good conversation.

I committed to President Bush that we are pressing ahead with the FTA, and also we will work closely with U.S. by drafting the plan of action in the cooperation between our two countries and also with the third country as well if the two countries would like to work together with, in helping or in working with other countries.

I also want to welcome the President to meet with the ASEAN seven during APEC meeting in November in Korea.

President Bush. Finally, I do want to thank the Prime Minister and His Majesty for sending relief supplies to our folks that have been affected by Hurricane Katrina. This good country has just come through a tsunami, and they're on their way to recovery. And yet they were able to, through their—because of their generous hearts,

ship help. And so thanks very much, and please thank His Majesty for his generous contribution to the folks down there.

Thank you, sir. Appreciate it. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:52 p.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to King Phumiphon Adunyadet of Thailand.

Joint Statement by President George W. Bush and Prime Minister Thaksin Chinnawat of Thailand

September 19, 2005

President George W. Bush and Prime Minister Thaksin Chinnawat met today to reaffirm the strength of the U.S.-Thai alliance and the importance of bilateral cooperation in regional and global affairs. Both leaders recognized the special and enduring bonds between the two countries as well as between the American and Thai people, demonstrated most recently by the close cooperation following last December's devastating tsunami and after Hurricane Katrina. President Bush expressed his admiration for the resilience and determination of the Thai people and government in rebuilding areas affected by the tsunami and pledged continued U.S. assistance. The President noted Thailand's effort to mobilize support for an establishment of a regional tsunami early warning system.

Prime Minister Thaksin once again expressed his profound condolences for American casualties and the devastation from Hurricane Katrina. President Bush expressed his appreciation for His Majesty the King of Thailand's donations for the people affected by Hurricane Katrina and for Thailand's dispatch of emergency relief supplies.

The two leaders welcomed the expanding and deepening security cooperation that has followed Thailand's designation as a Major Non-NATO Ally and discussed plans to inaugurate a senior-level bilateral dialogue on strategic and security issues in Bangkok this fall. They also directed their officials to work together on a comprehensive Plan of Action covering all major areas of cooperation, aiming to serve as a roadmap to maximize the benefits arising from close and productive U.S.-Thai relations. In that context, the two leaders emphasized the importance of trilateral cooperation to support economic and social development in countries where both the U.S. and Thailand are working.

The two leaders discussed the importance of stepping up efforts to counter the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and pledged to explore cooperation in the Proliferation Security Initiative. The President noted the outstanding cooperation by U.S. and Thai military forces in this year's Cobra Gold joint exercises.

Both leaders expressed concern over current trends in Burma. Stressing their shared objectives of promoting democracy and national reconciliation in Burma, both sides agreed to have closer consultations on this matter. The two leaders noted that they had called for the immediate release of Aung San Suu Kyi and other jailed political activists when they met in 2003 and reiterated that this step was necessary for a credible process of political dialogue for all parties.

Prime Minister Thaksin briefed President Bush on Bangkok's efforts to deal with the violence in southern Thailand while preserving the democratic freedom that has made Thailand a leader in Southeast Asia. The President commended the Prime Minister's creation of a National Reconciliation Commission aimed at developing a broad-based approach to the South that combines

security, equitable development, and protection for basic rights.

The two leaders agreed to make vigorous efforts to reach conclusion on the U.S.-Thai Free Trade Agreement (FTA) next year. They expressed satisfaction with the fourth round of talks held in Montana in July and looked forward to the 5th round next week in Hawaii. President Bush and Prime Minister Thaksin agreed that the FTA must be beneficial to the people of both countries and comprehensive in its mandate, and it must address issues of importance to both sides.

The two leaders welcomed the signing of an Air Transport Agreement between the two countries that would provide substantial benefits to travelers and businesses and further expand bilateral economic linkages.

As the coordinator for ASEAN dialogue with the United States, Thailand plays a key role in U.S. engagement in Southeast Asia. President Bush and Prime Minister Thaksin discussed regional and development issues and ways to enhance U.S.-Thai cooperation in regional forums, particularly the ASEAN Regional Forum and the ASEAN Post Ministerial Conferences, as well as the vital nexus of economic, trade, and security issues at APEC. President Bush noted that he was looking forward to meeting jointly with ASEAN members of APEC at the Leaders' Meeting in Busan this November. The two leaders also expressed their support for the Aceh peace agreement underway in Indonesia and praised the serious efforts of both sides in achieving such a breakthrough.

Both leaders underscored the importance of combating infectious diseases and the urgency of addressing avian flu in particular. President Bush applauded Prime Minister Thaksin's leadership in responding to outbreaks in his country. The two leaders agreed on the critical importance of transparency, close monitoring, and cooperation across sectors and with international health organizations by all countries in the region. They pledged to intensify cooperation on global efforts to respond to this critical emerging issue.

President Bush and Prime Minister Thaksin agreed on the potential for even greater coordination on areas of mutual concern and overlapping interest and looked forward to meeting again in November at APEC.

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

Statement on the Recommendations of the National Commission on Election Reform

September 19, 2005

I greatly appreciate the excellent work of the bipartisan commission in identifying ways to strengthen the integrity of the voting process. It is critical to maintain America's trust in our election system, and I look forward to reviewing this report and working with Congress on the recommendations.

Remarks to the Governor's Commission on Recovery, Rebuilding, and Renewal in Gulfport, Mississippi
September 20, 2005

Thank you all. Please be seated. Thanks. Well, thanks for having me—again. A couple of things, observations: Every time I come back here, I see progress. You know, sometimes when you're so close to the situation, it's hard to really see noticeable change. But this part of the country is changing. And it's—you're moving forward. I don't know if you know that or not, but flying in or driving in, there's something different than the first time I was here.

Now, what wasn't different is, this Mississippi spirit is strong. It was noticeable. There is a can-do attitude in the midst of all the trauma and pain. One thing I noticed on my first trip was, "We can do this." And now I'm seeing it being done. "We can do this" means a lot of things. It meant, like Jerry Darden, who's there—Jerry, stand up for a minute—Jerry Darden rescued 20 people out of the flood waters. He represents kind of the heroic action that took place when the storm hit. I met him out at the airport. He said, "I never thought I'd get to see a President." [*Laughter*] I said, "I never thought I'd get to meet a fellow who saved 20 lives."

And that can-do spirit is—these county commissioners—we call them county commissioners—county supervisors and mayors who are dealing with unbelievable trauma, and you know, they're right there on the frontline of trying to comfort people who hurt. And yet, amidst all that agony and pain, they're going through was this comforting spirit. The can-do spirit is, you know, seeing progress being made. And inside this tent there's a can-do spirit of taking a horrible situation and making this part of the world better. And so I'm impressed.

And I think that when Haley said, "Well, we've got to make sure that people take a look down here to invest," the first thing they're going to look at is not the tax code, but the character of the people, which will give you a great advantage.

My pledge is—let me step back. I really appreciate this commission. I think it's really important for Mississippi folks to chart your path. And I know Gene Taylor feels that way, and I know the Senators feel that way. It's just—you really don't want the Federal Government telling you how to rebuild. What you want is the Federal Government to help you rebuild. You want a partner, not somebody who is going tell you what the strategy ought to be.

I also appreciate Haley saying that the State of Mississippi and this commission will take into account what the local folks think. Their input is going to be vital. I mean, you've got yourself some mayors and some supervisors who were elected by the people; you need to listen to them, because they're going to be listening to the people.

A couple of recovery items: One, I spent some time—quality time at the Chevron plant in Pascagoula, and I want to thank Roland for being here. By the way, you talk about a dedicated group of people who are working huge hours and long hours, not only to get that plant up and running but to help the community. It was an impressive display of compassion and hard work, and thanks for having me.

But I did hear from the mayors and the county supervisors, and there was a level of frustration, as there should have been. You know, you hear one thing about debris removal, and nothing is happening. Well, I got back, and I called them in, and I said, "Look, part of the recovery, we've got to help these folks have a sensible plan to start removing debris." We worked with Haley. The mayors tell me—I'm a little cautious about laying it out there—but the mayors tell me there is a plan now in place that is logical and that—where people will

begin to see concrete results when it comes to removing this debris.

We've got people looking at the infrastructure. One of the questions I asked in Washington, DC, as the principle party responsible for rebuilding the infrastructure, is, "Have you got your assessment teams out there?" You know, looking at these bridges requires more than just, you know, writing a check. It requires the Coast Guard to look at the spans. It requires the—I think you've got a role, in parts, on the State highways.

I mean, we're trying to help get this recovery going by plowing through the paperwork requirements as fast as possible so that we can reduce the frustration to you. And Haley is right, we have a responsibility by law to help rebuild the infrastructure. You can't rebuild a part of the world without your infrastructure in place, and we know that. And so we look forward to working with you to get this infrastructure up and running.

On the other hand, as Jim Barksdale said, "If you don't have a plan, if you don't have a plan of action, the recovery and the rebuilding will be haphazard." So I want to applaud this commission. In my speech the other night, I made it clear to the country that we expect local folks to come up with the vision. We want the Mississippi people to lay out the Mississippi vision about what this important part of the world is going to look like. And that's exactly what this commission is all about.

When they told me that Haley and Barksdale had invited me to come, I was thrilled, because I think it's really smart and really important to bring capable people together to delegate tasks, to think anew, obviously to utilize that which worked in the past to your advantage, but be willing to think anew, because you've got a fantastic opportunity. We'll get the debris removed. We'll get your water systems up and running as quickly as possible. We'll get your bridges built, but the vision that you detail as a result of this commission is going to be the blueprint for the future.

And so I really appreciate all the citizens who have agreed to take time out of your busy schedules to help plot the strategy for the future. It's really important; it's really important. And there's no doubt in my mind that out of the rubble and out of those huge heaps of timber that used to be homes, a better Mississippi will emerge.

At any rate, we look forward to working with you. Let me put it another way: We look forward to hearing your vision, so we can more better do our job. That's what I'm telling you.

And so, thanks for taking this on. Good luck. Think bold.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:35 a.m. at the Prime Outlets—Gulfport on Factory Shops Blvd. In his remarks, he referred to Gov. Haley Barbour of Mississippi; Roland Kell, refinery general manager, Chevron Pascagoula Refinery; and Representative Gary Eugene Taylor of Mississippi, member, and James L. Barksdale, chairman, Governor's Commission on Recovery, Rebuilding, and Renewal.

Remarks to Reporters in New Orleans, Louisiana
September 20, 2005

Hurricane Katrina Recovery

The President. I want to thank the folks here at the Folger plant for inviting us to come say hello. The reason I've come with the mayor and with Admiral Allen is because I want the people to know that

there's progress being made in this part of the world. We've got some people working here because of the ingenuity of the plant managers. Behind me you see temporary housing where this company has provided housing for the folks who work here.

Mayor C. Ray Nagin. FEMA helped.

The President. And FEMA helped with that. And what you're beginning to see is a revitalized economy. Progress is being made toward meeting the mayor's vision of a—and my vision and everybody's vision involved with this of a vibrant New Orleans and surrounding parishes.

The other thing, I've just come from a briefing about Hurricane Rita—or Storm Rita, now a category 2 hurricane—and we were watching very closely, of course, its track. All up and down this coastline, people are now preparing for what is anticipated to be yet another significant storm. Admiral Allen is going to stay in charge of the Louisiana/Mississippi area. We've got another admiral who is now being stationed in Texas to coordinate the relief response. We've got military assets that are being taken out of the New Orleans area, out of harm's way, and have come back in behind the storm, to follow up where it's needed.

I've been in touch with the Governor of Texas. I've been briefed on the planning for what we pray is not a devastating storm—but there's one coming. And I appreciate the mayor recognizing that, and he made a wise decision to say to people, "Be cautious about returning here because a flood—a rain of any amount could cause these levees to break again."

But progress is being made. As I said in Mississippi, I was pleased to see the progress being made on the ground. There's still a lot of work, but they're making progress. And they're making progress here in New Orleans too. Again, we've got a lot of work to do, but people are determined to get the job done.

Anyway, I want to thank you for having me. Thanks for having me back. Thank you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:40 p.m. at the Folgers Coffee plant. In his remarks, he referred to Mayor C. Ray Nagin of New Orleans, LA; Vice Adm. Thad W. Allen, USCG, U.S. Coast Guard Chief of Staff; Rear Adm. Larry L. Hereth, USCG, commander, Fifth Coast Guard District; and Gov. Rick Perry of Texas.

Statement on the Death of Simon Wiesenthal
September 20, 2005

Laura and I are saddened by the death of Simon Wiesenthal, a tireless and passionate advocate who devoted his life to tracking down Nazi killers and promoting freedom. Simon Wiesenthal lost 89 relatives in the Holocaust, yet he survived the death camps himself. He gathered intelligence to be used in war crimes trials and also passed on important information that led to the conviction of Adolf Eichmann. Throughout his long career, he relentlessly pursued those responsible for some of the most horrific crimes against humanity the world has ever known. Simon Wiesenthal fought for justice, and history will always remember him.

Letter to Congressional Leaders Transmitting a Report on the Accession of Bulgaria, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Romania, Slovakia, and Slovenia to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization
September 20, 2005

Dear _____ *:*

Consistent with section 2(10) of the Senate's resolution of advice and consent to ratification of the Protocols to the North Atlantic Treaty of 1949 on the Accession of Bulgaria, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Romania, Slovakia, and Slovenia of May 8, 2003 (Treaty Doc. 108–4), I am pleased to submit to the Congress the enclosed report prepared by my Administration.

This report is classified due to the nature of the information it contains regarding NATO's internal decision-making processes.

Sincerely,

GEORGE W. BUSH

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to Richard G. Lugar, chairman, and Joseph R. Biden, Jr., ranking member, Senate Committee on Foreign Relations; John W. Warner, chairman, and Carl Levin, ranking member, Senate Committee on Armed Services; Thad Cochran, chairman, and Robert C. Byrd, ranking member, Senate Committee on Appropriations; Henry L. Hyde, chairman, and Tom Lantos, ranking member, House Committee on International Relations; C.W. Jerry Lewis, chairman, and David R. Obey, ranking member, House Committee on Appropriations; and Duncan Hunter, chairman, and Ike Skelton, ranking member, House Committee on Armed Services. This letter was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on September 21.

Remarks at the Republican Jewish Coalition 20th Anniversary Luncheon
September 21, 2005

Thank you all. Please be seated. Thank you. Thanks for the warm welcome. Thank you. Thanks for the warm welcome. I'm honored to join you in celebrating the 20th anniversary of the Republican Jewish Coalition. The RJC has been a powerful voice for the values of limited government, free enterprise, and a strong national defense. I want to thank you for your patriotism. I want to thank you to the devotion to our country. Because of your efforts, I really believe America is a stronger and better place.

I'm particularly pleased to be invited to help pay tribute to one of the founders of this organization, Max Fisher. He was a trusted adviser to many Presidents, starting with Ike. He has been a friend of my family's. I was honored to count him as a wise counselor. I'm honored to know his wife, Marjorie, who is with us today. Max Fisher was a man of generosity and accomplishment, a patriotic American, a friend of Israel, and a champion for peace. And he's going to be greatly missed.

As well, we mourn the passing of a great hero for freedom, Simon Wiesenthal. Simon Wiesenthal was a survivor and a witness, who served—who seared the horror of the Holocaust in the collective memory of the world. He's one of these leaders that refused to back down. He spoke with clarity. He insisted that we remember the lessons of the crime. He insisted that we remember that hatred prepares the way for

violence, and the failure to expose and confront intolerance can lead to atrocities beyond imagining. As we saw in the recent desecration of the synagogues in Gaza, the ancient hatred of anti-Semitism still burns in the hearts of men. And the best way we can honor Simon Wiesenthal's memory is to expose and confront anti-Semitism wherever it is found. By condemning this hatred at home and abroad, we stand with the victims of the *Shoah* and declare to the world: Never again.

I want to thank my friend Sam Fox. I appreciate your friendship, you and Marilyn. I want to thank you for your leadership. I want to thank Matt Brooks. A smattering of applause out there for old Matty. [*Laughter*]

I see some of the members of my administration here. I thank you all for coming. Don't linger too long. Get back to work. [*Laughter*] I appreciate the Members of the United States Congress who are with us. I see Senators and Congressmen—thank you all for coming.

I know we got—we've got some statehouse folks here. I think my friend Haley Barbour is here. He was looking for a meal—he told me that on the plane yesterday. [*Laughter*] Anyway, he's doing a fine job as the Governor of Mississippi. Governor Romney is here with us today. I appreciate him being here. Lieutenant Governor Michael Steele is with us—Michael—from Maryland. Thank you for coming. Lieutenant Governor Brian Dubie from Vermont is with us. Brian, thank you for being here.

How about your master of ceremonies? Good to see you, Ari. Thanks for coming. How's the kid? Huh? Good. Good man and a good friend, Ari Fleischer.

I want to thank my friend Lew Eisenberg for being one of the cochairmen of the luncheon—and Elliott Broidy. I appreciate you all taking this assignment on.

You're honoring good people today. Bernie Marcus—I appreciate the spirit of your corporation, Bernie—or your cooperation—your corporation during these tough times. It's remarkable. And I want to thank you for the outpouring of compassion you and your folks have shown. Shelly Adelson, congratulations, Shelly. It's good to see you. And of course, the man who is doing a fantastic job at the RNC, Ken Mehlman.

I appreciate the fact that the Israeli Ambassador to the United States is with us today. He's a good man—Danny Ayalon. Good to see you, Danny.

When I first came here, I looked around, I thought it might have been the ex-ambassadors club. [*Laughter*] Former Ambassadors Bernstein, Price, and Sembler are with us. Thank you all for serving our Nation, proud you're here.

We are a strong and resilient nation. I've seen that strength, and I've seen that resiliency firsthand. One of the things that I hope you take comfort in knowing is that throughout our history, we've been challenged a lot, and every time we've been challenged, we have emerged a stronger and better nation. There is no challenge of man or nature that our citizens cannot overcome.

And we're facing some challenges these days. At this moment, our fellow citizens along the gulf coast are recovering from one of the worst natural disasters in this country's history. Hurricane Katrina caused immense destruction. You cannot imagine what that countryside looks like down there. This storm swept away homes. It destroyed entire communities. It uprooted lives. And today, we've got another hurricane headed for Texas and Louisiana. I spoke to the Governor, Perry. I spoke to Governor Blanco yesterday about the preparations being made for this storm. Federal, State, and local governments are coordinating their efforts to get ready. Mandatory evacuations have been ordered for New Orleans and Galveston. I urge the citizens to listen carefully to the instructions provided by State and local authorities, and

follow them. We hope and pray that Hurricane Rita will not be a devastating storm, but we got to be ready for the worst.

The scenes we witnessed in the past 3 weeks in Alabama and Mississippi and Louisiana have touched our hearts and have moved this Nation to action. I'm not talking about just government; I'm talking about the whole country. There has been an amazing outpouring of support all across America, and it's sent a clear message to the victims of Hurricane Katrina: This Nation cares about you. You're not alone.

I made a pledge to the people of Alabama and Mississippi and Louisiana that we're going to stay as long as it takes. We'll do our job to help you recover. People need to hear that loud and clear. And I outlined our strategy for reconstruction on the gulf coast. It rests on three commitments.

First, we're going to help meet the immediate needs of those whose lives were turned upside down. You got to understand thousands of people had to leave their homes and left all their possessions behind and went to shelters all throughout America. We have a duty to help them. So far we've mailed checks to 600,000—600,000 evacuee families to help them pay for food and clothing and other essentials. We helped them register for other aid that will be available because of laws on the books.

Second, we're going to help the citizens get their lives back together. We've got housing assistance going to evacuees. We understand they can't live forever in shelters. We've got a strategy to help them go from shelter to apartment, or shelter to home. We've sent doctors and nurses to the region to help.

You know, an amazing thing that's happened is a lot of States have accepted the families—the kids of these families into their schools. What a fantastic gesture of compassion and decency. In our own State of Texas, school district after school district has said, "If you have a child that's school age, bring them to us. We'll help educate them." The Federal Government has an obligation to reimburse those school districts, and I'm going to work with Congress to make sure we fulfill that obligation.

And third, we're going to help ensure that the communities emerge stronger and better. The storm caused huge suffering, as I told you, but it's an opportunity to bring new life to neighborhoods that were suffering before the storm. So I've proposed some interesting ideas, and I want the United States Congress to listen carefully to these ideas.

First, I believe we ought to create Gulf Opportunity Zones up and down the devastated areas to provide tax incentives and tax breaks to get business and jobs back in that area as quickly as possible. If you want to grow something, you shouldn't tax it. If you want to encourage small-business growth, we ought to incent it to grow in that part of the world. Somebody said the other day, "Well, that's a tax break." That region is going to have zero income anyway. There's nothing there, in many parts of it. It makes sense to provide economic incentive, create economic incentives for jobs to exist. We want people heading back there for good, decent, good-paying jobs.

I've proposed Worker Recovery Accounts to help evacuees be prepared for the jobs that are going to exist in that part of the world. Listen, there's going to be a construction boom down there. We want people from that part of the world being prepared to take on those jobs. And so these Worker Recovery Accounts will help with job training.

I believe in urban homesteading. That says we're going to identify Federal property and provide lots for low-income citizens that they'll have for free, so long as they build a house on there with a mortgage or with the help of a charitable group like Habitat for Humanity.

We've got a fantastic chance as we rebuild. See, when those streets are open, we want them to be lined with businesses, including businesses owned by minorities.

When those houses are rebuilt, we want more owners and less renters. When reconstruction is complete, we ought to look back at Hurricane Katrina and say that this country grew not only in prosperity but in character as well.

There's a Federal role to play, and we'll play it. We'll do our duty. But there's also a State role and a local role. I believe as the vision of New Orleans emerges, it ought to be planned by people from New Orleans. And as the vision of that gulf coast of Mississippi emerges, it ought to be planned by the people in Mississippi. And we're going to help them. We'll help them make right choices. But we've got to remember that perhaps the greatest engine for change and growth will be the private sector. So as Congress thinks through its strategy, let's encourage the private sector to come in and help build those jobs and rebuild those lives.

We'll make sure your money is spent wisely. We're going to make sure we make tough choices and set priorities here in Washington, DC. And we're going to make sure that the money is spent honestly by sending a team of inspector generals down there to review all expenditures. That's what the people of this country expect, and that's exactly what we're going to do.

The American people have got a role to play in this effort. And since this storm, our Nation's armies of compassions have rallied and have come to the aid of people who are in desperate need of help. Our charities and houses of worship and idealistic men and women across this country have opened up their homes, their wallets, and their hearts. There's been an amazing, amazing outpouring of help. And the Jewish community of this country has been on the forefront of the efforts.

At Tulane University, the director of the Chabad, Rabbi Rivkin, brought teams of students to New Orleans and southern Mississippi and other communities hit by the storm. He called in folks to help. He didn't say, "Head away from the storm area." He said, "Let's take it right to the middle of the storm area to help people." They helped rescue stranded people. They distributed bottled water and self-heating kosher meals. They cleaned up and helped salvage homes. They provided spiritual support for those who lost loved ones. And one of those rescued from New Orleans put it this way: In the days after Katrina hit, "Chabad saved lives."

Rabbi Stanton Zamek of the temple Beth Shalom Synagogue in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, helped an African American couple displaced by the storm track down their daughter in Maryland. When Rabbi Zamek called the daughter, he told her, "We have your parents." She screamed out, "Thank you, Jesus." [*Laughter*] He didn't have the heart to tell her, she was thanking the wrong rabbi. [*Laughter*]

Jewish organizations have thus far raised $17 million to help the victims of Katrina. Our citizens are answering the call of the Prophet Isaiah: "If you give what you have to the hungry, and fill the needs of those who suffer, then your light will rise in the darkness, and your darkness will be like the brightest time of day." People are hearing that call all across the country. And there's more work to be done. I urge you to continue to pay attention to the folks down there by contributing to the Red Cross or the Salvation Army or the United Jewish Communities or B'nai B'rith International or the American Jewish Committee.

It's important. We got a lot of work to do. But when it's all said and done, people are going to realize that this country can respond to crises and help a neighbor in need. This country has got enormous heart and enormous compassion. After it's all said and done, because of the compassionate outpouring of our people, the country's heart, collective heart, is going to be stronger and better.

You know, something we—I've been thinking a lot about how America has responded, and it's clear to me that Americans value human life and value every person as important. And that stands in stark contrast, by the way, to the terrorists we have to deal with. You see, we look at the destruction caused by Katrina, and our hearts break. They're the kind of people who look at Katrina and wish they had caused it. We're in a war against these people. It's a war on terror. These are evil men who target the suffering. They killed 3,000 people on September the 11th, 2001. And they've continued to kill. See, sometimes we forget about the evil deeds of these people. They've killed in Madrid and Istanbul and Baghdad and Bali and London and Sharm el-Sheikh and Jerusalem and Tel Aviv. Around the world, they continue to kill.

They have a strategy. They want to achieve certain objectives. They want to break our will. They want the United States of America and other freedom-loving nations to retreat from the world. Why? Because they want safe haven. They want to topple government. Just think Taliban in Afghanistan. That's their vision. And we can't let them do that.

We have a solemn duty as a United States Government to protect the American people from harm. We have a solemn duty to remember there are generations coming behind us. We have a solemn duty to stay on the offense against these people, to defeat them in other lands so we don't have to face them here at home. And we have a solemn duty to lay the foundation of peace for generations to come.

Iraq is the central battlefront in the war on terror. It's not the only place we're fighting the terrorists, but it's the central front right now. You see, the terrorists want to turn that country into what Afghanistan was. Imagine a place like Iraq, where they've got safe haven to plot and train. That's what they want. That's why they're pouring in there. That's why they're going into the country. That's why they're trying to create instability. They got a powerful weapon—these car bombs that end up on our TV screens. They got the capacity to affect our conscience because we value every life. Every person matters to the United States—people of the United States of America. It doesn't matter whether it's a—living in Iraq or right here at home, we care deeply. And they know that. And they're trying to get us out of there, is what they're trying to do, for a strategic objective. They want to be able to continue their war against freedom-loving people, with Iraq as a base.

We've got our own strategy. We've got a strategy for victory. Our troops—we've got incredibly brave troops—are hunting these people down and bringing them to justice. We're training the Iraqis so they can fight—take the fight to the enemy alongside of us. Our motto is this—it's important for you to understand—as Iraqis stand up, we stand down. That means as they become more and more capable, it's up to them to take the fight to the enemy, with our help. It's up to them to be on the frontlines of dealing with these people.

We're also going to defeat the enemy because they have no vision for the future that's positive. You can't be successful in convincing people to follow you if your vision is so dark and so dim as that of the terrorists. They have nothing to offer except violence.

We've got something to offer, and that's freedom. And freedom is powerful. I believe this. At the heart of my belief is, one, there's an Almighty; and two, that freedom is a gift from the Almighty God to each man and woman in this world. That's what I believe. Freedom is not exclusively American. Freedom is universal. And last January, the people of Iraq showed the universality of that freedom. Now, it seems like a decade ago, doesn't it, since those 8½ million people went to vote, but it wasn't all that long ago. And a lot of people around the world didn't

believe that there was this great desire to be free. And yet, 8½ million people showed up to the polls. They said, "We want to be free. We want something other than the dark vision of these coldblooded killers, people who kill our children and kill police and kill aid workers and try to kill coalition forces."

And now the people have come together in difficult circumstances and written a constitution, and it's a good constitution. It's a constitution written with compromise, not with guns. It's a constitution where they're trying to overcome years of brutality because of a tyrant. And then the people are going to go to the polls again and vote for a government. No matter how many car bombs there are, these terrorists cannot stop the march of freedom in Iraq.

But that march of freedom is not contained to Iraq only. I don't know if you paid attention to it the other day, this past weekend, but the Afghan people went to the polls again. They had a successful Presidential election. Now they voted for the parliament. It's amazing progress in a country that not all that long ago was a safe haven for Usama bin Laden and his plotters, that plotted the September the 11th attacks.

But freedom isn't—the march of freedom isn't contained in Afghanistan alone. We saw the march of freedom take place in Lebanon, Kyrgyzstan, Ukraine, and Georgia. These examples of freedom are inspiring others. Freedom is universal. People want to live in freedom, and the more the world becomes free, those who live in darkness will demand the light of freedom. And as freedom advances, we're laying the foundation of peace for our children and our grandchildren. [*Applause*] Thank you all. Thank you. Thank you.

This isn't easy work. I see the Members of Congress are still here, halfway through the speech. [*Laughter*] I want to remind you it's not easy, what we're doing, but it's necessary. It's the calling of our time. It's an opportunity to say, "We've done our duty." It's an opportunity to say, "We made this country safer, and we made the world better."

I got a partner in peace in Ariel Sharon. I've been impressed by his leadership. Sam mentioned the time when the RJC flew four Governors—and I happened to be one—to the Holy Land. And we went to a briefing by the Government of Israel then, and one of the Cabinet members was Ariel Sharon. And after the briefing, he introduced himself. He said, "Would you like to go on a helicopter ride and take a look at the West Bank?" I said, "Are you flying?" No—[*laughter*]—I said, "You bet."

It's interesting how history works, isn't it? In 1998, fall of 1998, the future President of the United States and the future Prime Minister of Israel were flying across the—across that country, with him describing to me how to keep Israel secure. A couple of lessons I took away from there is, one, you know, how tiny the country is. You know, a guy from Texas, we got a lot of space there. There's not a lot of space there. How vulnerable Israel can be. I also came away with the strong impression about how strong the people there not only want to defend themselves, but how much they love democracy, that democracy is a critical part of their existence.

Ariel Sharon has shown great leadership, and he made a tough and courageous decision. He decided to withdraw from Gaza. I'll never forget when he came and told me that. My immediate reaction was, "This is a bold step for peace, Mr. Prime Minister, and I support you." He saw it, and I think I did, too, at the time, that such a decision would really force the world to recognize that only true peace will come when we defeat terrorism and establish democracy.

And so now there's an opportunity, and the opportunity rests with the Palestinian people to show that they can govern themselves in a peaceful way. The policy of this Government is to streamline the security

forces so there's only one authority with security forces, and that's the authority that campaigned based upon a peace platform. The policy of this Government is to help entrepreneurship flourish, to help small businesses start. The Arab world needs to help right now. They need to step in and help the peaceful democratic forces within the Palestinian—within Gaza to thwart those whose stated objective is the destruction of Israel.

The United States of America is firmly committed to defending the security and the well-being of our ally Israel. And we'll work with our friends in the region and throughout the world to achieve the peace that all want. My hope is that someday, there will be two democratic states, Israel and Palestine, living side by side in peace.

These are historic times, and they're challenging, but I've got to tell you, I've got great hope, too, for the future. You know, in our response to terror and tragedy, we have seen how great suffering can awaken an even greater love, and we've been reminded there is no evil from which our Creator cannot draw forth greater good. You know, the attacks of September the 11th really causes us to be more determined than ever to defend our way of life. And it also gave us an opportunity to advance the cause of freedom that were previously unthinkable. And out of the horror of Katrina is going to come a rebirth for parts of our country that will mean people down there will be able to live with greater hope and prosperity—the hope of prosperity—than ever before.

It's such an honor to be the President of a country that not only deals with our adversity but is able to create good out of the adversity we face. And the reason why we're able to is we've got a indomitable spirit, and we've got a land full of people that are incredibly generous and strong and compassionate. And I appreciate being in a room full of such people.

I want to thank you for your friendship. Thank you for the love of America. May God bless you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12 noon in the Andrew W. Mellon Auditorium. In his remarks, he referred to Sam Fox, national chairman, and his wife, Marilyn, Matthew Brooks, executive director, and Lewis M. Eisenberg and Elliott Broidy, members of the board of directors, Republican Jewish Coalition; Gov. Mitt Romney of Massachusetts; former White House Press Secretary Ari Fleischer; event honorees Bernard Marcus, co-founder, The Home Depot, Inc., Sheldon G. Adelson, chairman of the board, Las Vegas Sands Corp., and Kenneth B. Mehlman, chair, Republican National Committee; former U.S. Ambassador to Denmark Stuart A. Bernstein; former U.S. Ambassador to Mauritius, Seychelles, and Comoros John Price; former U.S. Ambassador to Italy Melvin Sembler; Gov. Rick Perry of Texas; Gov. Kathleen Babineaux Blanco of Louisiana; Rabbi Yochanan Rivkin, director, Tulane University Chabad Jewish Student Center; former President Saddam Hussein of Iraq; Usama Bin Laden, leader of the Al Qaida terrorist organization; and Prime Minister Ariel Sharon of Israel.

Message to the Congress on Continuation of the National Emergency With Respect to Persons Who Commit, Threaten To Commit, or Support Terrorism
September 21, 2005

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 national emergency with respect to persons who commit, threaten to commit, or support terrorism is to continue in effect beyond September 23, 2005. The most recent notice continuing this emergency was published in the *Federal Register* on September 22, 2004 (69 *FR* 56923).

The crisis constituted by the grave acts of terrorism and threats of terrorism committed by foreign terrorists, including the terrorist attacks in New York, in Pennsylvania, and against the Pentagon committed on September 11, 2001, and the continuing and immediate threat of further attacks on United States nationals or the United States that led to the declaration of a national emergency on September 23, 2001, has not been resolved. These actions pose a continuing unusual and extraordinary threat to the national security, foreign policy, and economy of the United States. For these reasons, I have determined that it is necessary to continue the national emergency declared with respect to persons who commit, threaten to commit, or support terrorism, and maintain in force the comprehensive sanctions to respond to this threat.

GEORGE W. BUSH

The White House,
September 21, 2005.

NOTE: The notice is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

Remarks on the War on Terror and Preparations for Hurricane Rita and an Exchange With Reporters in Arlington, Virginia
September 22, 2005

The President. I appreciate being back at the Pentagon. I just finished a briefing with Secretary Rumsfeld and General Myers and, obviously, members of my national security team, along with Generals Abizaid and Casey and Ambassador Khalilzad from the Middle East, via videoconferencing. We got an update on the wide range of missions being carried out by our Armed Forces.

Before I talk about the briefings and our war on terror, I do want to thank the leadership here in the Pentagon, Secretary Rumsfeld and others as well as all our folks who wear the uniform, for their help in the aftermath of Katrina. We have more than 50,000 soldiers, sailors, airmen, and marines, including thousands of National Guardsmen and Reservists, on the ground helping the people there. These good folks showed great capacity and compassion for

our fellow citizens who hurt. They saved a lot of lives. On behalf of a grateful nation, I thank them for their service.

We now got another hurricane coming, Hurricane Rita. This morning I met with Secretary Chertoff about Rita. I talked to Governor Perry again. I talked to him last night. I talked to him this morning. This is a big storm, and it's really important for our citizens there on the Texas coast to follow the instructions of the local authorities. Officials at every level of government are preparing for the worst. Our Armed Forces have prepositioned troops. We have resources there to help the Federal, State, and local officials to respond swiftly and effectively.

As we meet our responsibilities in dealing with these two significant storms, Katrina and Rita, our focus on defending our country remains undiminished. Today General Abizaid delivered a detailed brief on the global war on terror, with particular attention on the major battlefronts in Afghanistan and Iraq.

In Afghanistan, we have nearly 18,000 American troops who continue to serve as part of a coalition that has made extraordinary progress in delivering freedom and security to the people of that proud nation. This past Sunday, the Afghan people took another vital step toward democracy by electing representatives to their provincial councils and the National Assembly. President Karzai described the moment this way: "After 30 years of wars and interventions and occupation and misery, today Afghanistan is moving forward." And that's positive news for the world.

Our mission in Afghanistan is not yet complete. The international community is helping Afghanistan become a lasting democracy. There are still terrorists who seek to overthrow the young Government. See, they want to return Afghanistan to what it was under the Taliban, a miserable place, a place where citizens have no rights, women are oppressed, and the terrorists have a safe haven to plan and plot attacks. And that's why coalition forces and our special forces and Afghan forces are conducting precision raids against high-value targets in southeastern Afghanistan. Our country will stand with the Afghan people as they secure their freedom and become an ally in the war on terror.

As we work to help defeat the enemies of a democratic Afghanistan, we're also working to defeat the enemies of a democratic Iraq. General Casey briefed us about a comprehensive strategy to achieve victory in Iraq. We're going to deny the terrorists a safe haven to plot their attacks. We'll continue to train more Iraqi forces to assume increasing responsibility for basic security operations. Our forces will focus on hunting down high-value targets like the terrorist, Zarqawi. We'll continue working with Iraqis to bring all communities into the political process. Together we'll help Iraq become a strong democracy that protects the rights of its people and is a key ally in the war on terror.

General Abizaid and General Casey extensively talked about how we're going to achieve this victory. The terrorists are concentrated in 4 of Iraq's 18 Provinces. Over the last several months, terrorists have continued to launch suicide attacks and assassinate Iraqis who are working to improve their country. The number of attacks has increased, particularly in the last week, as the terrorists have begun their campaign to stop a referendum on the constitution.

See, they don't care who they kill. They just kill. They kill innocent people. They kill women. They kill children. They kill election workers. And they've had a history of this before. They've had a history of escalating their attacks before Iraq's major political milestones, like the handover of sovereignty in 2004, the free elections this past January, and the drafting of the constitution over the summer.

Recently, Zarqawi, the terrorist, the killer, has called for a total war on Shi'a Iraqis. His hope is to set off a civil war that will divide the country and derail its march to

democracy. Today our commanders made it clear, as Iraqis prepare to vote on their constitution in October and elect a permanent Government in December, we must be prepared for more violence.

To defeat the terrorists, we're constantly adapting to their changing tactics and conducting aggressive counterterrorism operations in the areas where they're concentrated. As more and more Iraqi security forces complete their training, they're taking on greater responsibilities in these efforts. Iraqi troops are increasingly taking the lead in joint operations. They're conducting independent operations and expanding the reach and effectiveness of American forces.

The growing size and increasing capabilities of the Iraqi security forces are helping our coalition deal with a challenge we have faced since the beginning of the war. It used to be that after we cleared out a city, there were not enough qualified Iraqi troops to maintain control. And so what would happen is, is that the terrorists would wait for us to leave, and then they'd try to move back in, and sometimes with success. Now the increasing number of more capable Iraqi troops allows us to hold on to the cities we have taken from the terrorists. The Iraqi troops know their people; they know their language; and they know who the terrorists are. By leaving Iraqi units in the cities we've cleaned out, we can keep the cities safe, while we move on to hunt down the terrorists in other parts of the country.

We saw the value of large and more capable Iraqi security forces in Najaf and Fallujah last year when America and Iraqi forces conducted joint operations to clean out terrorist strongholds. We followed up these successful efforts by working with the Iraqi Government to ensure that Iraqi forces were able to maintain law and order. We worked with local leaders to improve infrastructure and create jobs and provide hope. As a result, the people of Najaf and Fallujah are safer, and their cities are moving ahead with vital reconstruction. And that's part of our strategy to help develop a secure, safe democracy in Iraq.

We're seeking to repeat this success elsewhere in Iraq, most recently in the country's northwest region. This area was the main route of foreign terrorists entering Iraq from Syria and a major concern of coalition forces. During operations in the key town of Tall 'Afar, Iraqi security forces outnumbered U.S. forces for the first time in a major offensive operation. Our joint efforts killed, captured, or flushed out hundreds of terrorists. As a part of General Casey's strategy, Iraqi forces remain in Tall 'Afar to ensure that the terrorists are not allowed to return, regroup, and hold hostage the innocent residents of that city.

Thanks to these operations, we're making it more difficult for foreign terrorists to enter through the northwest part of Iraq. Coalition and Iraqi troops are now focusing their efforts in western Iraq where we're trying to stop foreign terrorists from entering through Syria and prevent Al Qaida from establishing a safe haven in the Anbar Province.

General Casey is working with his Iraqi counterparts to restore Iraqi control of this region. And when we have completed this task, elements of the Iraqi military will remain to protect Iraq's border and ensure that the enemy does not return to dominate this region and intimidate its citizens.

To ensure that we can maintain this aggressive pace, the military operations through the election period, we have temporarily increased our troop levels, just as we have before other major political events. As the Iraqi security forces establish control over more and more of their country, American troops will support these forces and continue to hunt down the terrorists in the remaining problem areas.

Iraqi forces are showing the vital difference they can make. They are now in control of more parts of Iraq than at any time in the past 2 years. Significant areas of Baghdad and Mosul, once violent and

volatile, are now more stable because Iraqi forces are helping to keep the peace.

Iraqis are providing security in Najaf and parts of Diyala Province. In all these areas, the Iraqis are gathering useful intelligence. They're forging alliances with civic and religious leaders. As the Iraqi security forces show they're capable of keeping the terrorists out, they're earning the confidence of the Iraqi people and ensuring the success of a free and democratic Iraq.

Listen, there are differences of opinion about the way forward. I understand that. Some Americans want us to withdraw our troops so that we can escape the violence. I recognize their good intention, but their position is wrong. Withdrawing our troops would make the world more dangerous and make America less safe. To leave Iraq now would be to repeat the costly mistakes of the past that led to the attacks of September the 11th, 2001. The terrorists saw our response to the hostage crisis in Iran, the bombings in the Marine barracks in Lebanon, the first World Trade Center attack, the killing of American soldiers in Somalia, the destruction of two U.S. Embassies in Africa, and the attack on the USS *Cole.* The terrorists concluded that we lacked the courage and character to defend ourselves, and so they attacked us.

Now the terrorists are testing our will and resolve in Iraq. If we fail that test, the consequences for the safety and security of the American people would be enormous. Our withdrawal from Iraq would allow the terrorists to claim an historic victory over the United States. It would leave our enemies emboldened and allow men like Zarqawi and bin Laden to dominate the Middle East and launch more attacks on America and other free nations. The battle lines are drawn, and there is no middle ground: Either we defeat the terrorists and help the Iraqis build a working democracy, or the terrorists will impose their dark ideology on the Iraqi people and make that country a source of terror and instability to come for decades.

The only way the terrorists can win is if we lose our nerve and abandon the mission. For the security of the American people, that's not going to happen on my watch. We'll do our duty. We'll defeat our enemies in Iraq and other fronts in the war on terror. We'll lay the foundation of peace for our children and grandchildren.

Since our country was attacked on the morning of September the 11th, 2001, we have known that the war on terror would require tremendous sacrifice and commitment. Across the world, the brave men and women of our Armed Forces are taking on dangerous and difficult work. Some have given their lives in battle. They did so in a cause that is just and necessary for the security of this country. We're grateful for their service. We pray for their families they left behind. We'll honor their sacrifice by completing their mission and winning the war on terror.

I'll take a couple of questions. Nedra [Nedra Pickler, Associated Press].

Q. Mr. President——

The President. Nedra.

Preparations for Hurricane Rita

Q. Mr. President, what are you doing differently with Hurricane Rita approaching the coast that you didn't do with Hurricane Katrina, to make sure there aren't those catastrophic results?

The President. Yes. Well, I think one thing that's different is people understand the need to evacuate more clearly. I saw the mayor of Galveston, Texas, on TV, and she said that the people of her city seemed to have learned one of the lessons, and that is, take the evacuation orders very seriously. And so there appears to be a significant evacuation from parts of the Texas coast, to get out of harm's way.

Secondly, we've got Admiral Hereth on the ground; he's a Coast Guard Admiral. He'll be Admiral Allen's counterpart in Texas. He's there in Texas ready to go.

Like Katrina, we're moving Federal assets to be in position to move in. For example, the USS *Iwo Jima,* where we were the other day, has left New Orleans and is now tracking in behind the storm ready to bring marines and choppers into place. But that's not really that different from Katrina. We had choppers moving very quickly. In this case, though, we're able to come in behind the storm.

As you might remember, we had equipment that was—had to come across the land, fight through the storm to get there. This time we're going to be able to bring some assets around behind it, which I—will help get people—get some rescue missions there as quickly as possible.

But I think the biggest difference is people are aware of the danger of these storms, and people are responding at all levels of government.

Q. Mr. President——

The President. Hold on for a minute, please. Toby [Tabassum Zakaria, Reuters]. I'll get you in a minute. You seem anxious to ask a question.

Q. I am, sir.

The President. Okay, well, just take your time.

War on Terror

Q. Why has it been so difficult to catch bin Laden and Zarqawi? And can you really say that you are making progress in the war on terrorism when these people have been, you know, able to stay free for so long?

The President. Yes, I can say we're making progress in the war on terror. If you look at the organizational structure of Al Qaida right after September the 11th and look at it today, you'll see a lot of people have been brought to justice, Khalid Sheikh Mohammed, al-Libbi. I mean, there's a series of these folks that had been plotting and planning and ordering attacks. And we have found them—"we" being a coalition. So step one is, there is a coalition. A lot of people around the world understand the stakes, that this is global war against people who've got a dark vision and a strategy to achieve that vision.

Look, let me take a step back. People have got to understand that there is a global network of terrorists who desire to dominate a part of the world. They would like to see Taliban-type relationships in countries around the world. They want to be in a position to impose their philosophy. The best way for me to describe what life would be like is to remind people what life was like for those poor Afghan citizens under the Taliban. That's what—in other words, they have a strategy. We understand that. And we have a strategy, and part of the strategy is to call free nations together to form a coalition, to share information and to find people, before they hurt.

Now, look, they've been successful on attacks. They were successful here. They've been successful in London and Madrid. In other words, they have had attacks.

On the other hand, we've been successful at bringing them to justice and finding some of the killers before they were able to strike again. And so there has been success at bringing awareness to the international community about what we need to do. There's been success about bringing people to justice. No question that some of their leaders are still at large, isolated, however, kind of in remote parts the world. But make no mistake about it, we're doing everything we can to find them. And when we do, we'll bring them to justice.

We're now—a part of that global war on terror is in Iraq. And the reason why is because these killers and these terrorists understand that the spread of democracy is their worst nightmare. See, democracy trumps their view of the world. Democracy trumps Taliban-type regimes, because it's free. Because when you live in a free world, you have hope.

And so that's why you're seeing him—a guy like Zarqawi, who has become a top Al Qaida fighter—using every tool at his disposal, primarily the ability to get on TV

screens with a massive suicide bombing, the killing of innocent people. And he does so because they want us to retreat. I mean, the strategy is clear. And we're not going to let him get away with it. We will work for democracy in Iraq. We'll hunt them down. We will train Iraqi forces so they can deal with those who are disgruntled with the march to democracy.

But the war is beyond Iraq—that's what I'm trying to say to you. This is a global war. Afghanistan is a good example of progress being made. You might remember Afghanistan was the home base for the Taliban as well as Al Qaida. And now we've got a democracy in Afghanistan, and the world is better for it and safer for it.

You bet we're making progress. We've got a lot of work, and this is a long struggle. To defeat this enemy, the United States of America must understand that it's going to take—it's going to take time, just like it took time to defeat other struggles we had, other—to succeed in other struggles we've had, like communism, and it's going to take a while.

But what will accelerate the ability for the enemy to succeed is for the United States to lose its nerve. That's what I'm telling you.

You got a question, sir?

Q. Yes, sir, thank you.

The President. What might it be?

Funding for Hurricanes Katrina and Rita

Q. There is concern about the country's ability to pay for these hurricanes in the time ahead. Have you prioritized what may need to be cut?

The President. I'm going to work with Congress to prioritize what may need to be cut. The other day I said that we're open-minded about offsets. What's a priority for me is to win this war on terror and secure the country and to help the people down there to the extent that the law allows.

Q. Mr. President.

The President. Joseph [Joseph Curl, Washington Times].

Securing the Syrian Border

Q. Yes, sir. Why is it taking so long to secure the border at Syria? And do you really think that the Iraqis can secure it if the U.S. troops have been unsuccessful to do it so far?

The President. It takes a while to secure the border with Syria because it is a long border that has had smuggling routes in existence for decades. In order to secure a border, it requires cooperation on both sides of the border, and we're getting limited cooperation from Syria. We've made it clear to Syria, we expect them to help us secure their border and to stop the transit of suiciders coming from other countries through Syria into Iraq. Their response hasn't been very satisfactory to date. I continue to remind them of their obligation.

And so it's a long border. One of the things is that we need to continue to train the Iraqis to be better controllers of the border, and that's one of the missions that General Casey briefed us on today.

Bianca. Nobody named Bianca? Well, sorry Bianca's not here. I'll be glad to answer her question.

Q. I'll follow up.

The President. No, that's fine. [*Laughter*] Thank you though, appreciate it. Just trying to spread around the joy of asking a question.

Transfer of Security Responsibilities to Iraq

Q. How is the strategy outlined today by General Casey different from what the United States was doing in the past? What lessons would you say have been incorporated in it? And based on that, how much closer do you think we are to being able to turn over full control of the security situation?

The President. It's going to be awhile to turn over full control. Full control says that the Iraqis are capable of moving

around the country and sharing intelligence, and they've got a command control system that works like ours, and that's going to be a while. Turning over some control to Iraqis is now taking place. As I told you, there are more Iraqis in the lead—Iraqis are in the lead in this mission for the first time on a major operation.

What General Casey briefed us on was how our strategy of cleaning out the terrorists out of a city and being able to fill in behind or leave behind Iraqi forces, is beginning to pay off. And what hadn't happened in the past was the capacity to fill that void with a capable force that would prevent the terrorists from coming back in.

Q. Mr. President, could we talk more about——

The President. Are you Bianca?

Q. No, I'm not. Anita [Anita Siegfriedt]—FOX News.

The President. Okay.

Funding for Hurricanes Katrina and Rita

Q. Just a quick question——

The President. Okay. I was looking for Bianca. I'm sorry.

Q. ——more about the funding for—with the devastation of Katrina and so forth, and just more on—I know you're going to meet with Congress to talk about maybe offsets in spending.

The President. Yes.

Q. Can you talk a little bit more about——

The President. The first thing is, we're in the process of understanding how much cost the Federal Government is responsible for, for Katrina and possibly Rita. For example, we're obligated for at least 75—by law, obligated for at least 75 percent of infrastructure repairs. So in order for us to be able to understand what needs to be offset or how we work with Congress on reducing expenditures in other areas, we first have to understand the scope of the request. And so, step one is to understand—is to take inventory of the roads that we'll be responsible for repairing, the bridges we'll be responsible for repairing, the waste water sewage systems we'll be responsible for repairing, the schools we'll be responsible for repairing. And we're now in the process of inventorying the costs.

We have made a decision, for example, to send a $2,000 check to each family that has been evacuated. We're getting a pretty good handle on the extent of that, so when we speak to Congress—say, that's a pretty fixed amount. We understand how much that's going to be. And so what I'm telling you is, we're in the process of understanding the size and scope of the Federal response, so that we can then say to Congress, "Here is what we anticipate over the next several years the cost will be, and here is our expectations in how we can pay for it, and here are some offsets." And we're beginning to make those kinds of suggestions.

But you have got to understand it takes a while to understand the amount of Federal—the size of the Federal tab in this process. It just doesn't happen overnight. You just don't go down and look and say, "Oh, this is what it's going to cost." It requires an assessment, an inventorying of potential costs. And that's exactly what we're doing right now.

Another area of cost, for example, is debris removal. See, we know what our obligations are. We just, by the way, cut through a lot of redtape to allow for Federal debris removal from private property if the mayors were to sign a form basically designating parts of their city to be cleared by—private property to be cleared by the Federal Government. Now, we're beginning to understand what that—how much of that territory will be cleared by the Government and what our cost obligation is. And when we get those costs up, we'll be happy to share those with the United States Congress and then work through how we can pay for all this.

Thank you all very much.

Q. Mr. President, when you look at expenditures, do you have the list on the offset side?

The President. No, let me make sure you understand where we're headed. It's hard to work with Congress until we fully understand the size and scope of what is going to be expected for us to pay. And so we're in the process of now gathering that information, so that when we sit at a table, we're not guessing. It's not going to be perfect, but it's going to have some size and scope of what we're dealing with.

Now we're going to have, by the way, have to calculate in the effects of Rita. And once we do that—but it doesn't happen—see, you seem to think that somehow you go down there, and overnight it's clear what we owe. But it requires assessment and inventorying of—like, for example, sewage treatment facilities. It takes a while to understand how many of those need to be repaired and what the cost will be. And that's what we're in the process of doing.

Q. ——without targeting expenditures, how about targeting offsets?

The President. We'll work with Congress on that, of course, and—but the point is, is that we're going to work together and come up with a solution that will, obviously, help deal with the budget and—but first and foremost, the Federal Government has got obligations by law, and I want to understand those obligations and the extent of those obligations and, as best we can, estimate the cost of those obligations.

Thank you all very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:57 a.m. at the Pentagon. In his remarks, he referred to Gen. John P. Abizaid, USA, commander, U.S. Central Command; Gen. George W. Casey, Jr., USA, commanding general, Multi-National Force—Iraq; U.S. Ambassador to Iraq Zalmay Khalilzad; Gov. Rick Perry of Texas; President Hamid Karzai of Afghanistan; senior Al Qaida associate Abu Musab Al Zarqawi; Usama bin Laden, leader of the Al Qaida terrorist organization; Mayor Lyda Ann Thomas of Galveston, TX; Rear Adm. Larry L. Hereth, USCG, commander, Fifth Coast Guard District; Vice Adm. Thad W. Allen, USCG, U.S. Coast Guard Chief of Staff; Khalid Sheikh Mohammed, senior Al Qaida leader responsible for planning the September 11, 2001, terrorist attack, who was captured in Pakistan on March 1, 2003; and Abu Faraj al-Libbi, senior Al Qaida associate arrested in Pakistan on April 30.

Remarks Following Discussions With King Abdullah II of Jordan
September 22, 2005

President Bush. Your Majesty, welcome back. We have just had a wide-ranging and fruitful discussion about the Middle East. I want to thank you very much for your vision of a peaceful world, one in which people are able to practice their religion freely and one in which women are empowered. Your Majesty is a leader, and the United States of America respects his leadership a lot.

One of the things I asked His Majesty to do was to go to visit with Prime Minister Sharon and President Abbas, to help in the peace process there, and he's graciously agreed to go. I want to thank you, sir, for taking a leadership role. It will be very helpful to have your voice of reason there to talk to both leaders.

Relations between Jordan and America are strong and important and vital. And again, I want to welcome you and thank you very much for your advice and counsel on a lot of different subjects.

King Abdullah. Thank you, Mr. President, always a pleasure to be back. And thank you very much for always the kind support that you've given me and all Jordanians.

As you said so, we've had some very fruitful discussions on the peace process and Iraq. And I want to thank you again for the support that we have gotten from you for so many years on giving hope to Israelis and Palestinians. And I know that you want to find a solution that Israelis and Palestinians can live in peace and harmony, and I hope that, if we can help in that respect, that is a great honor for us.

Thank you for allowing us to see you again, sir.

President Bush. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:48 p.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Prime Minister Ariel Sharon of Israel; and President Mahmoud Abbas (Abu Mazen) of the Palestinian Authority.

Remarks at the Federal Emergency Management Agency and an Exchange With Reporters

September 23, 2005

The President. I stopped by the center to get a full briefing on Rita. We're now facing yet another big storm, and I appreciate the folks here who are working so hard to help the folks on the ground prepare for the storm.

I'm going down to San Antonio to see the prepositioned assets, to understand the relationship—or that the Federal Government's role is to support State and local governments. I want to watch that happen. Then I'm going to go out to our NORTHCOM headquarters to watch the interface between our United States military and, again, the State and local authorities. Our job is to assist—prepare for and assist the State and local people to save lives and to help these people get back on their feet.

Again, I want to thank the people here in Washington who are working with the folks in the—out in the field to do everything we possibly can to prepare for this second big storm that's coming into the Gulf of Mexico.

Thank you all.

President's Upcoming Visit to Texas and Colorado

Q. Sir, what good can you do going down to the hurricane zone? Might you get in the way, Mr. President?

The President. One thing I won't do is get in the way.

Q. But I mean, how—what good can you actually do? I mean, isn't there a risk of you and your entourage getting in the way?

The President. No, there will be no risk of me getting in the way, I promise you. We're going to make sure that we're not in the way of the operations. What I am going to do is observe the relationship between the State and local government, particularly out in Colorado Springs. That's what I want to see.

See, NORTHCOM is the main entity that interfaces, that uses Federal assets, Federal troops to interface with local and State government. I want to watch that relationship. It's an important relationship, and I need to understand how it works better.

Q. But critics might say this is overcompensation for the response to Katrina.

The President. We will make sure that my entourage does not get in the way of people doing their job, which will be search and rescue immediately. And rest assured, I understand that we must not and will not interfere with the important work that will be going forward.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:32 p.m.

Remarks on Presenting the Congressional Medal of Honor to Tibor Rubin
September 23, 2005

Laura and I welcome you to the White House. This is a special occasion for our Nation. We're here to pay tribute to a soldier with an extraordinary devotion to his brothers in arms and an unshakeable love for his adopted homeland of America.

Corporal Tibor "Ted" Rubin—many acts of courage during the Korean war saved the lives of hundreds of his fellow soldiers. In the heat of battle, he inspired his comrades with his fearlessness. And amid the inhumanity of a Chinese prisoner-of-war camp, he gave them hope. Some of those soldiers are here today, and they have never forgotten what they owe this man. And by awarding the Medal of Honor to Corporal Rubin today, the United States acknowledges a debt that time has not diminished.

It's our honor to welcome Ted's wife, Yvonne; daughter, Rosie, a second grade teacher, I might add—[*laughter*]—Frank and Lai, welcome. Glad you all are here.

Vice President, thank you for coming. Mr. Secretary, we're proud you're here. I appreciate Senator John Warner, the chairman of the Armed Services Committee. Congressman Robert Wexler of Florida, welcome. Thank you for being here. Former Congressman Ben Gilman and Georgia are with us.

Secretary of the Army Francis Harvey; Pete Geren, acting Secretary of the Air Force; "Admiral G," Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs is with us; General Pete Schoomaker, Chief of Staff of the United States Army. And Rabbi, thank you very much for your blessings.

I want to thank Ambassador Andras Simonyi, the Ambassador of Hungary to the United States, for joining us. Proud you're here. Yes. [*Laughter*]

So honored to have the four Medal of Honor recipients with us: Barney Barnum, with the United States Marines; Al Rascon, the Army; Bob Foley, the Army; and Jack Jacobs of the Army. Proud you're here. Thanks for being here.

The Medal of Honor is the highest award for bravery that a President can bestow. It is given for acts of valor that no superior could rightly order a soldier to perform. And that is what we mean by "above and beyond the call of duty." By repeatedly risking his own life to save others, Corporal Rubin exemplified the highest ideals of military service and fulfilled a pledge to give something back to the country that had given him his freedom.

Born in Hungary in 1929, Ted and his family were rounded up by the Nazis and taken to concentration camps when he was just 13 years old. He was taken to Mauthausen Camp in Austria, where an SS officer told the prisoner, "You, Jews, none of you will ever make it out of here alive." And many did not. Before the war was over, both of Ted's parents and one of his sisters were lost in the Holocaust. Ted Rubin survived the camp for 14 months, long enough to be liberated by U.S. Army troops on May the 5th, 1945.

These American GIs gave Ted his first real taste of freedom. Their compassion for the people in the camp made a deep impression on this teenage survivor. It was his first experience with soldiers who were fighting to protect human life. That day Ted made a promise to himself: If he ever made it to America, he would show his appreciation to this great land by enlisting in the United States Army. He did move to America after the war, and the young immigrant made good on his pledge. Even though he was not yet a citizen, he volunteered to serve his new nation in uniform, and 7 months after taking the oath of a U.S. soldier, he was sent to Korea.

The conditions were brutal. The fighting was intense, and the bitter cold was unrelenting. And it was in these grueling circumstances that Corporal Rubin impressed his fellow soldiers in the 1st Cav Division as one of the best ever to wear our Nation's uniform.

Those who served with Ted speak of him as a soldier of great skill and courage. One night near the Pusan Perimeter, Corporal Rubin had been assigned to hold a hill that was essential to the 3d Battalion safe withdrawal. For 24 hours this lone rifleman would defend the hill against an overwhelming number of North Korean forces. By his actions, Corporal Rubin inflicted heavy casualties on the enemy, saved the lives of countless soldiers, and gave the unit time to withdraw.

Those who served with Ted speak of him as a soldier who gladly risked his own life for others. When Corporal Rubin's battalion found itself ambushed by thousands of Chinese troops, the Americans' firepower soon dwindled to a single machine gun. The weapon was in an exposed position, and three soldiers had already died manning it. That was when Corporal Rubin stepped forward. He fought until his ammunition was gone. He was badly wounded, captured, and sent to a POW camp. He risked his life that day to protect his fellow American soldiers, and his heroism helped many of them escape.

Those who served with Ted speak of him as a soldier whose many acts of compassion helped his fellow GIs survive the nightmare of imprisonment. As a teenager, Ted had taught himself how to survive the horrors of a Nazi death camp. He was resourceful, courageous, and unusually strong. And in Korea, he drew on these qualities to help keep many of his POWs alive. Whenever he could, at the risk of certain execution, Corporal Rubin would sneak out and steal food rations from the guards, and then he shared them with his fellow soldiers. Throughout this ordeal, he nursed those who were sick back to health and said the Kaddish prayers for those he buried.

And when his captors offered to release him to Communist Hungary, with the guarantee of a good job and nice clothes and plenty of food, Corporal Rubin refused. He said, "I was in the U.S. Army, and I wouldn't leave my American brothers because they need me here." Ted's decision was in character.

As a Jew and non-citizen serving in uniform, he had experienced prejudice in the Army. And he knew that the America he fought for did not always live up to its highest ideals. Yet he had enough trust in America's promise to see his commitment through. He saw it as his personal duty to live up to our Nation's promise, and by doing so, he set an example of what it means to be an American.

Many heroes are remembered in monuments of stone. The monuments to Corporal Rubin are a legacy of life. We see his legacy in the many American families whose husbands, fathers, and sons returned home safely because of his efforts. We see his legacy in the free and democratic South Korea that grew on the soil of his sacrifice. And we see his legacy in a new generation of American men and women in uniform who were inspired to their own acts of courage and compassion.

Today we remember the mother, father, and sister that Corporal Rubin lost to an unspeakable evil. We admire the determination of a young man who sought to repay his American liberators by following in their footsteps, and we recall the selfless acts that gave his comrades strength and hope in their darkest hours.

In the years since Abraham Lincoln signed into law the bill establishing the Medal of Honor, we have had many eloquent tributes to what this medal represents. I like Ted's description. He calls it "the highest honor of the best country in the world." And today a grateful America bestows this award on a true son of liberty.

I now ask the military aide to read the citation.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:45 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Secretary of Defense Donald H. Rumsfeld; former Representative Benjamin A. Gilman of New York and his wife, Georgia; Adm. Edmund P. Giambastiani, Jr., USN, Vice Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff; and Col. Rabbi Kenneth J. Leinwand, USA, installation chaplain, Fort Meade.

Remarks During a Briefing on Hurricane Rita in Colorado Springs, Colorado

September 24, 2005

Admiral, thank you very much for a series of briefings that really do comfort me in knowing that our Federal Government is well-organized and well-prepared to deal with Rita. I've come here to watch NORTHCOM in action, to see first hand the capacity of our military to plan, organize, and move equipment to help the people in the affected areas, in this case, of Louisiana and Texas.

We've had full briefings on the storm, it's activities. The first order of business now is to surge search-and-rescue teams, to pull people out of harm's way. Just had an assessment by General Honore, of Lake Charles, Louisiana. It got hit hard. We've got teams on the ground, beginning to analyze the situation and prepare the necessary response to stabilize the situation and, more importantly, save lives there as well.

It's very important for the citizens who have headed into east Texas to understand that even though the storm has passed the coastline, the situation is still dangerous because of potential flooding. A lot of people have left the coastline and headed into east Texas and parts of western Louisiana. It is important for them to listen carefully to the local authorities about whether or not it is safe to return back to their home. It's going to take a while for the authorities on the ground to fully understand the impact of the flooding. And therefore, people who are safe now ought to remain in safe conditions.

At any rate, Admiral, thank you very much for your hospitality. I appreciate your leadership. I want to thank all the folks who work here in NORTHCOM for doing their duty, which is to organize and rally the assets of the of the Federal Government, to help our fellow citizens who are in need.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 7:50 a.m. at Peterson Air Force Base. In his remarks, he referred to Adm. Timothy J. Keating, USN, commander, U.S. Northern Command; and Lt. Gen. Russel L. Honore, USA, commanding general, First United States Army.

The President's Radio Address
September 24, 2005

Good morning. This weekend I will visit U.S. Northern Command in Colorado where we're monitoring Hurricane Rita. As the hurricane continues along its destructive path, the American people can know, courageous and dedicated men and women are responding to our citizens in need. We are marshaling resources of the Federal Government to save lives and property, and bring comfort to those who have evacuated because of this storm.

Over the past week, Federal, State, and local governments have been closely coordinating their efforts for Hurricane Rita. The Department of Homeland Security and FEMA prepositioned food, water, ice, and emergency response team, and helped with the evacuations in Texas and Louisiana. Military assets were also prepositioned so they could be deployed immediately after the storm passes.

At this moment, the following Navy ships are in the region: the *Iwo Jima*, the *Shreveport*, the *Tortuga*, the *Grapple*, the *Patuxent*, and the *Comfort*. The Texas National Guard has activated its Guardsmen, nearly 3,500 so far, with more on call if they are needed. Coast Guard cutters, aircraft, and helicopters are in place, ready to rescue, evacuate, and relocate civilians trapped by the storm. And additional Coast Guard air crews and aircraft are now arriving from around the country.

We've also organized and identified civilian volunteers, including more than 200 doctors and more than 400 registered nurses. The American Red Cross is prepared to deliver hundreds of thousands of meals a day. Our Government is taking every step possible to protect life and bring comfort to those affected.

As we respond to Hurricane Rita, we're continuing our efforts to help the citizens of the gulf coast recover from Hurricane Katrina, a storm that has caused unprecedented destruction across an entire region. The recovery of Louisiana, Alabama, and Mississippi is a commitment of the American people, and in this effort, all Americans have a role to play. In the recovery effort, the Federal Government has a vital role, and we'll do our duty. We'll help rebuild roads, bridges, schools, water systems, and other infrastructure in the disaster zone. We will cut through redtape in Washington so we can speed the work of rebuilding and get the gulf coast region back on its feet.

In the recovery effort, State and local leaders will play a vital role in laying out their plans and vision for the future of their communities. Earlier this week, I met with community leaders and local officials in the region to hear their ideas on rebuilding and recovery. I told them that the vision of a revitalized New Orleans should come from the people of New Orleans, and the vision of a new gulf coast of Louisiana, Mississippi, and Alabama should come from the people of those States. We will do everything we can to guide the recovery effort and help them realize their vision so that communities along the gulf coast are better and stronger than before the storm.

In the recovery effort, the private sector will play a vital role. To rebuild lives and communities, we need to encourage small-business growth in that region, with immediate tax relief and other incentives for job-creating investment. Private enterprise is the engine for creating new jobs in America, and it will be the engine that drives the recovery of the gulf coast.

In the recovery effort, the American people will play a vital role. This week, Laura visited Texas to thank leaders of faith-based groups who've rallied to help their Louisiana neighbors in desperate need. Charities and houses of worship and idealistic men and women across America have

opened up their homes, their wallets, and their hearts to the victims of Katrina. And with the arrival of another violent storm, our neighbors in the gulf coast will need continued help. Our fellow citizens in the affected areas can know they can count on the good hearts of the American people.

The past 3 weeks have tested our Nation and revealed the strength and resilience of our people. Americans have the determination and the will to overcome any challenge from man or nature. The courageous spirit of America will carry us through any storm, and the compassionate soul of our Nation will help us rebuild.

Thank you for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 12:50 p.m. on September 23 in the Cabinet Room at the White House for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on September 24. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on September 23 but was embargoed for release until the broadcast. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of this address.

Remarks at the Texas Emergency Operations Center in Austin, Texas
September 24, 2005

Listen, I want to stop by to thank you all for the hard work you're doing. I appreciate Senator Hutchison and Cornyn, Congressman DeLay, Governor Perry.

First of all, the people of the State are counting on you. And I know you're working hard, and I appreciate the response. Nobody asks for these things, but when they come, we have a duty. I'm really here to let the folks in Texas know that the Federal Government knows we have a responsibility to support you in the mission of saving lives, first and foremost, and then help and rebuild their lives.

There's some issues that we've been briefed on that I think it's important for our fellow citizens to understand, in Texas, that for those who feel like they need to get back to a city like Houston, it's important to delay your trip so that essential personnel are able to get to the affected areas. We've got—we're moving assets—military assets, for example—trying to help people who need help, and if the highways are clogged, it's going to make it hard to get those assets into the affected areas.

Houston hospitals, for example, are in need of nurses. Nurses who are now trying to get back in are having problems getting on the highways. And so I would ask for those of you in the State to—who are in safe places now, not to hurry back to a city like Houston and let these highways flow the necessary goods and services to the people in deep east Texas who have been affected.

I know for a lot of folks in this State, it's miserable times. I hope you can take some comfort knowing there's a lot of people—like the people in this room—who are working overtime to save you and to help you, and that I think you'll be amazed by the extraordinary compassion of the people of Texas as they rise up to help their fellow citizens in need.

At any rates, it's good to see you all. Thank you for your hard work. May God bless those who have been affected, and may God bless those who are helping those who have been affected, and may God bless the country. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:12 p.m. In his remarks, he referred to Gov. Rick Perry of Texas.

Remarks on Arrival in San Antonio, Texas
September 24, 2005

The President. Mr. Mayor, thanks—[*inaudible*]—and the Judge. It's good to see you all, thanks. It's good to be back in San Antonio.

The country and the world has seen the great compassion of the Texas people after Hurricane Katrina. Over 300,000 people moved east to west, and they found home here in Texas. And the city of San Antonio, Mr. Mayor, and Judge, was—really rose up with great compassion. And I cannot thank you enough and the people of this city enough, for providing safe haven for people whose lives were turned upside down by this horrific storm. And it made me so proud to be from the State of Texas, to see the Texans rise to the occasion.

Again, I want to thank you, Mayor, and thank all the——

Mayor Phil Hardberger. Thank you, Mr. President.

The President. ——houses of worship and community groups and individuals who love their neighbor like they'd like to be loved themselves.

We're now dealing with another storm, and the State of Texas is prepared for and is now responding to the storm that's affecting east Texas. I briefed today up in Colorado about the Federal Government's response to the storm and then went to Austin to be briefed by the State officials, to make sure that we're working in concert with the State. And then tomorrow morning General Clark is going to come over and brief me once again about how the Federal Government is helping the State of Texas and Louisiana recover.

But at any rate, it's good to be back here. I'm proud of my fellow Texans, and I'm proud of the people of the San Antonio.

Mayor Hardberger. Well, we're mighty glad to have you here, Mr. President. Thank you for being with us.

The President. Thank you, Mr. Mayor. Thank you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 4:26 p.m. at Randolph Air Force Base. In his remarks, he referred to Mayor Phil Hardberger of San Antonio, TX; Bexar County Judge Nelson W. Wolff; and Lt. Gen. Robert T. Clark, USA, commander, Joint Task Force—Rita.

Remarks During a Briefing on Hurricane Rita in San Antonio
September 25, 2005

[*The briefing is joined in progress.*]

The President. Yes, having said that about Katrina, there were still some amazingly heroic efforts in pulling people off roofs. I don't know how many sorties were flown in Katrina, but there must have been thousands of sorties.

Maj. Gen. White. Well, as I left last Wednesday, it was close to 18,000 sorties flown. Now, sir, that includes every agency, and it's a lot of the airlift in there too.

The President. Your point is, on a Katrina, had there been a better coordinated effort between Guard choppers—Coast Guard choppers, regular Army choppers, it would have been less dangerous?

Maj. Gen. White. It would have been a better orchestrated plan. You wouldn't have seen a lot of—for instance, one of the things that we've learned out of that—we had someone that needed to be rescued, and that comes up on the net. Five

helicopters show up at the same place to get one person. That's the sort of simplistic thing we'd like to avoid, and we're not maximizing the use of our forces to best efficiency.

Certainly, that was a train wreck that we saw in New Orleans, and I know everybody is jumping in, trying to help at one time, and that's the right thing to do. But if we can have a national plan that would address the search and rescue at this magnitude, is what we're out to try to do.

The President. Good.

Maj. Gen. Mayes. Sir, if I might add, I would say that it wouldn't necessarily make it less dangerous. I would tell you that the professionalism and the plan came together. I believe that all participants would agree that with the fog that we had and the weather that we were battling, nighttime, all the things that went into that environment, that I'm not sure we can make it less dangerous. There may be a factor there, but the main point would be, with a national plan, we'll have a quicker jump-start and an opportunity to save more people. That would be my input there.

Lt. Gen. Clark. A national plan, good training against the plan, gets you to this state faster in extremis. And that's the goal.

The President. Part of the reason I've come down here and part of the reason I went to NORTHCOM, was to better understand how the Federal Government can plan and surge equipment, to mitigate natural disasters. And I appreciate very much, General, your briefing, because it's precisely the kind of information that I'll take back to Washington to help all of us understand how we can do a better job in coordinating Federal, State, and local response.

The other question, of course, I asked was, is there a circumstance in which the Department of Defense becomes the lead agency? Clearly, in the case of a terrorist attack, that would be the case, but is there a natural disaster which—of a certain size that would then enable the Defense Department to become the lead agency in coordinating and leading the response effort. That's going to be a very important consideration for Congress to think about.

Okay.

NOTE: The President spoke at 7:30 a.m. in the headquarters of the Air Education and Training Command at Randolph Air Force Base. Participating in the briefing were Maj. Gen. John White, USAF, member, Maj. Gen. M. Scott Mayes, USAF, member, and Lt. Gen. Robert T. Clark, USA, commander, Joint Task Force—Rita. A portion of these remarks could not be verified because the tape was incomplete.

Remarks at the Federal Emergency Management Agency Joint Field Office in Baton Rouge, Louisiana

September 25, 2005

The President. Thank you all. The Governor and I just got briefed by Admiral Allen on the progress here in Louisiana. There's still assessment on the damage of Hurricane Rita. One of the things that is important for the citizens of this State to do is to listen to the Governor about when it is okay to return back to your homes. I know a lot of people want to get back home. It's important that there be an orderly process. It's important there be an assessment done of infrastructure, and it's important for the people of the affected areas of Louisiana to listen carefully to the Governor and local authorities about the proper timing of return home.

We also got briefed on the levees in New Orleans. There is flooding, obviously, in the

ninth ward. The Corps of Engineers gave us a briefing about the building—repairing levees and then, once again, pumping the water out of that part of New Orleans. It's—I would say it's an optimistic appraisal, in the sense that work has started now, and they can start to—draining that part of the city again.

But I'm here to really thank the people in the Operations Center for their hard work and their dedication to helping the people of Louisiana recover from a second major storm in a very quick period of time.

Governor, thank you for your hospitality, again. I know you've been through a lot, and I know the people of this State have been through a lot. We ask for God's blessings on them and their families.

Thank you.

Governor Blanco. Well, we want to welcome you back. I'm sorry that we brought you back under another stressful event. But we do appreciate your support. And I do want to tell you how much we appreciated watching all of the integrated forces at work as one. And as we talked, I know that it was possible to do it quickly, and to move in as one, with Federal, State, and local folks working all together.

We talked about what happens next here and how quickly we could marshal the right kind of forces again. And I think that, together, we're going to work out some very important plans that citizens of the United States can feel will work very effectively and efficiently.

Thank you.

The President. Thank you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:08 p.m. In his remarks, he referred to Gov. Kathleen Babineaux Blanco of Louisiana; and Vice Adm. Thad W. Allen, USCG, U.S. Coast Guard Chief of Staff.

Remarks at the Department of Energy and an Exchange With Reporters *September 26, 2005*

Energy Supply

The President. I want to thank Secretary Bodman for welcoming us here at the Energy Department; Secretary Norton. We've just had a full briefing on what we know thus far about the effects of Hurricane Rita on the energy situation in the Gulf of Mexico.

A lot of our production comes from the gulf, and when you have a Hurricane Katrina followed by a Hurricane Rita, it's natural, unfortunately, that it's going to affect supply. There's about 1.56 million barrels of oil that is shut in. And before Rita, just to put that in perspective, that was approximately 880,000 barrels a day that was shut in due to Katrina, so that when you really look on a map you have, if you follow the path of Katrina and the path of Rita, it pretty much covers a lot of the production in the Gulf of Mexico.

Right now the producing companies are assessing damage to the platforms and rigs. It's important for our people to know that we understand the situation and that we're willing to use the Strategic Petroleum Reserve to mitigate any shortfalls in crude oil that could affect our consumers. And I've instructed the Secretary of Energy to be mindful once again about the effects of the SPRo and how it can help settle price. He did a fine job after Katrina, and we're paying close attention to the markets as we speak.

Secondly, gasoline prices, obviously, are on our mind, and so we've watched very carefully the assessments done on the refining—the refineries there on the gulf coast.

There are a lot of—a lot of gasoline refineries in the Houston area, in the Beaumont area, in the Port Arthur area, as well as Lake Charles, and the Louisiana area. There was about 5.4 million barrels per day that were shut in as a result of Rita and Katrina. A million of it is back up already, and we expect another 1.8 million barrels a day to get back on line relatively quickly because the storm missed a lot of refining capacity down the Texas coast.

We don't know yet about 1.7 million barrels a day that were located right in the path of Rita. And the Secretary has got his people in contact with the energy companies to find out exactly what we have to deal with. About 900,000 barrels a day are still shutdown as a result of Katrina. For those of you who went with me to the Chevron plant in Pascagoula, Mississippi, might remember the size of that facility and the scope of the damage it had sustained. They're working hard to bring these plants back up.

The other thing that's going to affect the ability for people to get gasoline is, of course, the pipelines. In other words, you manufacture the gasoline in a refinery, and you have to ship it across the country. There's three of the four major gasoline pipelines—three of the four pipelines in the affected area are major gasoline pipelines that supply the Midwest and the east coast.

The Plantation Pipeline, which is an east coast pipeline, is at 100-percent capacity. That's one of the real success stories of this storm. In other words, it didn't go down at all. Colonial, which sends gasoline up to the Midwest, is at 52-percent capacity. It will soon be about 70 percent and should be at 100 percent by the end of the week. The Explorer in the Midwest, sending gas to the Midwest, is at 67-percent capacity, should be at 100 percent next week. The Capline, which sends gasoline to the Midwest as well—it's a major crude pipeline, by the way, that sends crude to be refined in the Midwest—will be at about 75-percent capacity now, and obviously they're going to do everything they can to get it up to capacity.

My point is, is that the storm affected the ability to get gasoline to markets. I know the Governors of Florida and Georgia have done some creative things to try to anticipate what will be a temporary problem. Governor Perdue of Georgia I thought did a—showed some leadership by saying we've got to—anticipating a problem, "Here's what we need to do to correct it."

There's going to be some, by the way, and here's what we have done and will continue to do. We have suspended certain EPA winter-blend rules so that it makes it easier to import gasoline from overseas. In other words, there's a supply of gasoline in Europe, and by suspending these rules, it's a lot more likely to be able to get gasoline into our markets. And so while there's a shortfall because of down refining capacity, we will work with—we have instructed EPA to leave the rules in place—or to suspend the rules that were in place, keep the suspension in place, which would make it easier to increase supply and continue to get supply of gasoline here. And that's important for our consumers to know.

In Houston, the challenge in Houston, as I understand it, is to get drivers and trucks into Houston so they can deliver gasoline to the retailers. And the Secretary is working with the local authorities there to help do anything we can to help get that done so that people in that big city will be able to get some gasoline. Beaumont, Port Arthur are still under assessment. We're not sure yet the full extent of the damage.

I'll be going down there in the area tomorrow, and by then there will be a pretty clear assessment. I look forward to dealing with local—talking to local leaders about what—the situation and the problems they face.

Let me repeat, we'll use the Strategic Petroleum Reserve to help refineries with crude oil. We will continue the waivers to allow the winter blends of fuel to be used

throughout the country. We will continue to waiver that—to allow broader use of diesel fuel, because we understand there's been a disruption in supply, and we want to make sure that we do everything we can to help with the supply disruption.

The Homeland Security waived the Jones Act on restrictions on fuel transportation. We're allowing foreign-flag ships to temporarily transport fuel from one U.S. port to another. That's going to be important for expediting supply to deal with bottlenecks. We will continue that waiver. The Treasury and IRS announced that dyed diesel fuel for off-road use would be allowed on on-road use without penalty. In other words, we're taking action to help deal with the shortfall caused by Katrina and Rita.

Two other points I want to make is, one, we can all pitch in by using—by being better conservers of energy. I mean, people just need to recognize that the storms have caused disruption and that if they're able to maybe not drive when they—on a trip that's not essential, that would be helpful. The Federal Government can help, and I've directed the Federal agencies nationwide—and here's some ways we can help. We can curtail nonessential travel. If it makes sense for the citizen out there to curtail nonessential travel, it darn sure makes sense for Federal employees. We can encourage employees to carpool or use mass transit. And we can shift peak electricity use to off-peak hours. There's ways for the Federal Government to lead when it comes to conservation.

And finally, these storms show that we need additional capacity in America. We need additional refining capacity, for example, to be able to meet the needs of the American people. The storms have shown how fragile the balance is between supply and demand in America. I've often said one of the worst problems we have is that we're dependent on foreign sources of crude oil, and we are. But it's clear as well that we're also really dependent on the capacity of our country to refine product, and we need more refining capacity. And I look forward to working with Congress, as we analyze the energy situation, to expedite the capacity of our refiners to expand and/or build new refineries.

It is clear that when you're dependent upon natural gas and/or hydrocarbons to fuel your economy and that supply gets disrupted, we need alternative sources of energy. And that's why I believe so strongly in nuclear power. And so we've got a chance, once again, to assess where we are as a country when it comes to energy and do something about it. And I look forward to working with Congress to do just that.

I'll be glad to answer a couple of questions. Nedra [Nedra Pickler, Associated Press].

Race, Poverty, and the Hurricanes

Q. Thank you, Mr. President. I want to ask you about a different result of these storms, and that is the racial divide that's been exposed in this country. Blacks and whites feel very differently about what happened. We all recognize that the response to Rita was much better than the response to Katrina, but there are some strong feelings in the black community that that difference had a racial component to it, that the white, you know, rural residents got taken care of better than the black urban residents did. How do you respond to that?

The President. Well, I think about Houston, my own hometown of Houston, which is an incredibly diverse city. And we had what looked like a category 5 hurricane headed right for Houston, and the Federal, State, and local officials worked together to warn the citizens of the impending storm. The message wasn't sent to one group of people; it was sent to the entire city. I mean, Texas is a diverse State. The rural part of Texas you're talking about has got a significant African American component to it. But I can assure you that the

response efforts, and now the recovery efforts, are aimed at—aimed at saving everybody. And the response was directed toward everybody.

I think that what a lot of Americans saw was a—some poverty that they had never imagined before. And we need to address that, whether it be rural or urban. And I have done that as the President. I have said that education systems that simply shuffle children through are—can be discriminatory in nature. And therefore, we've got to have high standards and high expectations and focus money on Title I children to teach—so that children can learn to read. And we're beginning to make progress.

I have said that ownership is a way to counter poverty and being stuck in impoverished situations, and so homeownership is up. And business ownership is up amongst minorities. I have said that the faith-based programs are more likely able to address some of the hopelessness of people and therefore have empowered faith-based programs to interface with people. We've promoted mentoring programs for children whose parents might be in prison, as a way to help provide hope for people.

But this is an issue that this country must continue to address. Poverty is an issue that's an important issue, and poverty exists in New Orleans, Louisiana, and it exists in rural Texas, and it needs to be addressed in a significant way.

Toby [Tabassum Zakaria, Reuters].

New Supreme Court Nomination

Q. Mr. President, now that Judge Roberts is heading for confirmation, how close are you to choosing your second nominee for the Supreme Court? And how much of a factor is diversity going to be?

The President. First of all, I will—I'm cautiously optimistic about Judge Roberts' vote in the Senate. I will—he's done a fantastic job of showing the Senate and the American people he's not only a brilliant person but a decent person with a great heart. And so I await confirmation and hope it goes well. It looks like it might.

Your question indicated that it looked like it was headed in the right direction. I will withhold judgment until the Senate exercises their consent, part of the advice-and-consent relationship with the White House.

I have interviewed people from—in the past and thought about people from all walks of life. And I will put the person in to do the job. But I am mindful, you know, that diversity is one of the strengths of the country.

Any other questions? Yes.

Federal Response to Disasters

Q. Thank you. In suggesting that the Department of Defense might become the first-responder in catastrophic disasters, are you not conceding that the Department of Homeland Security is not up to the task?

The President. Oh, no, no let me—I appreciate you asking that question. One of the reasons I went out to NORTHCOM was to see the operations there, to look at how well organized NORTHCOM is, to listen to them talk about lessons learned from a major storm like Katrina, to think about ways for our country to properly respond to a catastrophic event, whether it be a natural catastrophic event or perhaps a terrorist attack.

And what I want the discussion to—I want there to be a robust discussion about the best way for the Federal Government, in certain extreme circumstances, to be able to rally assets for the good of the people. I don't want to prejudge the Congress's discussion on this issue, because it may require change of law.

But I do want them to think about a circumstance that requires a lot of planning and a lot of assets immediately on the scene in order to stabilize. And so what I was speculating about was a scenario which would require Federal assets to stabilize the situation, primarily DOD assets—DOD assets, and then hand back over to

Department of Homeland Security, for example. And I think it's very important for us as we look at the lessons of Katrina to think about other scenarios that might require a well-planned, significant Federal response right off the bat to provide stability. That's what I was talking about.

Kuwaiti Oil Proposal/New Domestic Refineries

Q. Mr. President, you had mentioned refining capacity. I'd like to ask you about an offer from the Kuwaiti oil minister, who has said that he is willing to offer to build a capacity—a refining capacity in the U.S. It would be the first time in about 30 years. Says he's asked for White House assistance—assistance getting permits and Federal support and so forth. What do you think of a proposal like that?

The President. I am for increasing supply, because I understand when the more supply there is of a product, that will take pressure off of price. I haven't seen this specific proposal. But I've also talked to U.S. refiners who have said, "We'd like to expand onsite, but the amount of paperwork necessary to do so is staggering." The issue of New Source Review, for example, is one that we've reviewed and said that, for the sake of, in this case, the expeditious expansion—and wise and careful expansion—of refining capacity, we ought to look at those rules and regulations. And yet we're back in court.

And so I think if you take a good look at what it means to build a refinery or expand a refinery, you'll find there's a lot of regulations and paperwork that are required, thereby delaying the capacity for more product to come on to the market and discouraging people from doing—building refineries. That's why we haven't had one since 1970-something.

So it's an interesting offer, and we'll, of course, look at it. The first thing we need to look at is how to encourage people to do just that without getting—without all kinds of time being taken up through the bureaucratic hurdles.

Okay, thank you—yes, ma'am.

Reconstruction in the Gulf Coast

Q. Some have called for the continued idea of the reconstruction czar. Has your administration reconsidered having someone in charge, a Federal person of the——

The President. Yes, "reconsidered" means we've ruled it out. I never have. I'm considering. "Reconsidered" means at some point in time, I decided not to have that. But I think the idea of having a Federal interface with local folks might be—might be a good idea.

First things first, however. Remember in my speech in New Orleans, I strongly said that this reconstruction vision ought to be a local vision. And if you might remember, the other day I went down to Mississippi and was with Governor Barbour and Jim Barksdale—he was the founder of Netscape, a local business guy who has put together a group of distinguished citizenry to help plan what south Mississippi ought to look like. And we'll see what else emerges—comes from that idea in Louisiana.

But the idea is, once these groups get up and running, they're going to have to interface with the Federal Government. And so I'm considering how best to balance the need for local vision and Federal involvement.

Now, there's going to be a lot of Federal involvement because we're going to spend money—wisely, I might add. And so it's an idea that I'm still considering. And I want to watch—because the reason why I'm comfortable about saying "still considering" is because we're still recovering. And we've got a lot of work to do to recover. I mean, when I go down to Mississippi, I appreciate the vision that they're beginning to think about, but my first priority was to help those local folks remove debris. And then the next question is, what do

we do with the debris once it's removed? And there's a lot of immediate needs.

If I were to go down to New Orleans today—I'm not—if I were, I'd be talking to the mayor; I'd be interested in the vision—but I'd be more interested in how we're going to get that water out of the ninth ward. And so I'm now interested—the next step of the recovery is how to get temporary housing in place, to get workers back so that jobs can get cranked up again.

In terms of Texas, when it comes to where my thought process is now, I'm interested in getting electricity to people and gasoline to people. But the vision element of reconstruction is just beginning, and there may be a need for an interface with a particular person to help make sure that the vision becomes reality. It's a long answer to a short question.

Thank you all. Appreciate it.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:59 a.m. in the Emergency Operations Center at the U.S. Department of Energy. In his remarks, he referred to Gov. Jeb Bush of Florida; Gov. Sonny Perdue of Georgia; Gov. Haley Barbour of Mississippi; James L. Barksdale, chairman, Governor Barbour's Commission on Recovery, Rebuilding, and Renewal; and Mayor C. Ray Nagin of New Orleans, LA. A reporter referred to Minister of Energy and Oil Ahmad Fahd al-Ahmad Al Sabah of Kuwait.

Memorandum on Energy and Fuel Conservation by Federal Agencies
September 26, 2005

Memorandum for the Heads of Executive Departments and Agencies

Subject: Energy and Fuel Conservation by Federal Agencies

Residents of the Gulf Coast States affected by Hurricanes Katrina and Rita have lost loved ones, lost homes, and been displaced from their communities. The Federal Government will continue to assist victims of the hurricanes. Our priority is first to save, sustain, and protect lives and then to restore important infrastructure needed for recovery.

A key component of this Administration's hurricane response plan is to ensure that sufficient supplies of natural gas, gasoline, and diesel fuel are available throughout the country, including in those areas hardest hit by the hurricane, as well as in those areas served by refineries and pipelines originating in the affected areas. Already we have made available oil from the Strategic Petroleum Reserve (SPR) to refineries that are short on supplies of crude oil, and we will continue to monitor this situation and the use of the SPR. The Department of Energy has deployed personnel and is working with local power companies, local authorities, and State authorities to help get electricity functioning and to ensure the repair and continuity of oil and gas pipelines that may have been affected by power outages. In addition, the Environmental Protection Agency has issued temporary fuel waivers under the Clean Air Act, and the Department of Transportation has suspended "hours of service" rules for fuel tanker trucks to make additional supplies of gasoline and diesel fuel available in those areas of the country affected by the hurricane. However, it is important that the Federal Government lead by example and further contribute to the relief effort by reducing its own fuel use during this difficult time.

Therefore, I hereby direct the heads of executive departments and agencies (agencies) to take appropriate actions to conserve natural gas, electricity, gasoline, and diesel fuel to the maximum extent consistent with the effective discharge of public responsibilities. All agencies should conserve fuel so we can reduce overall demand and allow extra supplies to be directed towards the hurricane relief effort. In particular, agencies should temporarily curtail non-essential travel and other activities that use gasoline or diesel fuel, and encourage employees to carpool, telecommute, and use public transportation to reduce fuel use. Federal agencies should also take action to conserve natural gas and electricity during periods of peak consumption by shifting energy-intensive activities to non-peak periods wherever possible and by procuring and using efficient Energy STAR-rated energy intensive appliances and products.

In addition, agencies should review their existing operating and administrative processes and conservation programs and identify and implement ways to reduce overall fuel use. Agencies should report to me, through the Secretary of Energy, within 30 days from the date of this memorandum on the fuel conservation actions taken. Agencies shall take these and other appropriate energy and fuel conservation actions using existing budget authority.

GEORGE W. BUSH

Remarks to Reporters in Beaumont, Texas
September 27, 2005

I just met with local county judges and mayors, along with the Governor. Obviously this area is hurt. The Governor knows that. I saw it firsthand, how it's hurt. We've got some priorities that we're in the process of working together to achieve. The first is food and water. The second is electricity and generators moving this way; there's a rational plan to distribute the generators. Thirdly, there's fuel. We fully understand that it's hard to maintain order if you don't have fuel for your cars and first-responders.

And I appreciate the planning that the Governor put into this. The State of Texas is—took precautions before the storm hit and is now responding. And our job is to work with the State. I have the top people here with me, the Coast Guard admiral, who is in charge of the Federal response. I had the head of FEMA with me, and I had a three-star Army general here, all of them here to help make sure these people can get their lives back together.

Again, the Governor has got a plan to make sure people don't come back too early. He's listening to the local judges and the mayors. Obviously, we want people to come home as quickly as possible. We want them to be able to do so in an orderly way. And when they get home, they find that there's a—you know, as best as possible, power and water.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:58 a.m. at Southeast Texas Regional Airport. In his remarks, he referred to Gov. Rick Perry of Texas; Rear Adm. Larry L. Hereth, USCG, commander, Fifth Coast Guard District; R. David Paulison, Acting Director, Federal Emergency Management Agency; and Lt. Gen. Robert T. Clark, USA, commander, Joint Task Force—Rita. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Remarks Following a Briefing on Hurricane Rita in Lake Charles, Louisiana
September 27, 2005

The President. Governor, thank you very much for your hospitality. It's been my honor to talk to some of these parish presidents and mayors of the affected area. I came down to make sure that things are going as best as they possibly can go.

First of all, I want to compliment the local folks for the heroic efforts they made to save life. I understand there's a lot of frustrations with the people who left this part of the country. People that are scattered around want to come back and see their homes, and they want to come back to the communities they love. But it's very important for them to understand that now is not the time to come back, until they get the utilities up and running and until they can get the sewer systems running and until they get some water people can drink.

I heard loud and clear from the parish presidents and the mayors that, you know, people are getting frustrated. And I understand that frustration. But I think it's very important to listen to the Governors—the Governor and the local folks about the conditions at home. People are working hard to get the utilities up. They're working hard to get fuel here for people. And this area is going to rebuild, and it's going to grow again.

Those who've been displaced, those in the affected areas know that they can call a FEMA number to get a $2,000 check for each family. And that will help you in your time away from your home, so please call and register. Last night we made the decision that the people affected by Rita will be treated the same way, with a $2,000 check, as those treated—those affected by Katrina.

So anyway, Governor, thanks for having me. Senators and Congressmen, thank you for coming. I particularly want to thank these parish presidents and mayors for their—if you look at them, you see—if you look in their eyes, you see people who have been through a lot. And they're showing strong leadership, and I admire their stand and the courage they take.

Governor, if you'd like to say something.

Governor Kathleen Babineaux Blanco. Well, Mr. President, first, let me say thank you for joining us today. You know, as you understand well, our people have been through a lot in southwest Louisiana. I do want to tell you that some things worked right this time. We learned a lot of lessons from our previous experience with Katrina. Our communications network stayed up. All of these folks could continue communicating their needs to us because there was a communications system that was—not in place; it was brought in by your people and our people, working together.

I want to thank you because we have to continue a very close partnership in order for our recovery to be effective and in order for Louisiana to become whole again. We want to be players in this national economy. Our industries across this State have been impaired for the time being, but we know we can bring them back. The oil and gas industry is dependent on our health—on a healthy Louisiana. The fisheries are dependent on Louisiana. We provide food to the people of the United States out of these parishes. Our agricultural industry is tremendously stressed.

But we know we can make it back, but we only can make it back with your help. So thank you again for coming. Thank you for letting all these folks tell you about their personal experiences. And we believe that we're going to make it back because you're here with us, and we know we have a good partnership.

The President. Listen, thank you all. Appreciate you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:36 p.m. at Chennault International Airport. In his remarks, he referred to Gov. Kathleen Babineaux Blanco of Louisiana.

Remarks on the War on Terror
September 28, 2005

Good morning. I just had a good meeting with Generals Abizaid and Casey. We discussed the war on terror in which this country is engaged. General Abizaid talked about the global scope of this war. He talked about the nature of an enemy we face, an enemy which is ruthless and brutal, an enemy which has got strategic goals and tactics necessary to achieve those goals. We also talked about the fact that we're determined to defeat the enemy. We discussed our strategy for victory in Iraq as well. After all, Iraq is a key battlefront in this war on terror.

I asked the Generals to go up to Capitol Hill to brief Members of the House and Senate on our strategy for victory, on our operations in Iraq. They updated me on what recently took place in Baghdad, in which Iraqi and coalition forces tracked down and killed Abu Azzam, the second most wanted Al Qaida leader in Iraq. This guy is a brutal killer. He was one of Zarqawi's top lieutenants. He was reported to be the top operational commander of Al Qaida in Baghdad. He is one of the terrorists responsible for the recent upsurge in attacks in the Iraqi capital, which is part of their campaign to stop a referendum on the Iraqi constitution and is part of their efforts to break the will of the American people and the will of our coalition.

Our strategy is clear in Iraq. We are hunting down high-value targets like Azzam and Zarqawi. We're coordinating aggressive counterterrorism operations in the areas where the terrorists are concentrated. We're constantly adapting our tactics to the changing tactics of the terrorists. We're training more Iraqi forces to assume increasing responsibility for their country's security.

The growing size and increasing capability of the Iraqi security forces are helping our coalition address a challenge we have faced since the beginning of the war. And General Casey discussed this with us in the Oval Office.

See, it used to be after we cleared the terrorists out of a city, there wasn't enough qualified Iraqi troops to maintain control, so when we left to conduct other missions, the terrorists would move back in. Now, the increasing number of more capable Iraqi troops has allowed us to better hold onto the cities we have taken from the terrorists. The Iraqi troops know their people. They know their language, and they know who the terrorists are. By leaving Iraqi units in the cities we've cleared out, we can keep the cities safe while we move on to hunt down the terrorists in other parts of the country.

We saw such success in the country's northwest region, where Iraqi and coalition forces recently targeted an area that was one of the main routes that foreign terrorists use to enter Iraq from Syria. During the operations in the key town of Tall 'Afar, Iraqi security forces outnumbered coalition forces for the first time in a major offensive operation. General Casey brought us up to date on that operation. Because of our joint efforts, hundreds of terrorists have been killed or captured or flushed, which makes it more difficult for the foreign terrorists to enter Iraq through the northwest route.

As part of General Casey's strategy, Iraqi forces remain in Tall 'Afar to ensure that the terrorists are not allowed to return and

regroup. Coalition and Iraqi troops are on the hunt for terrorists in western Iraq. We're on the offense. We have a plan to win. We're working to stop those terrorists from crossing into the country through Syria, and we're denying safe haven to Al Qaida in the Anbar Province.

Members of Congress will get the latest information about our strategy, and I want to thank them for taking time out of their schedules to listen to these two Generals. They will hear about the strategy and the progress in increasing the size and capability of the Iraqi security forces. At this moment, more than a dozen Iraqi battalions have completed training and are conducting antiterrorist operations in Ramadi and Fallujah. More than 20 battalions are operating in Baghdad, and some have taken the lead in operations in major sectors of the city.

In total, more than 100 battalions are operating throughout Iraq. Our commanders report that the Iraqi forces are operating with increasing effectiveness. As Iraqi forces show they're capable of keeping the terrorists out, they're earning the trust and confidence of the Iraqi people, which ensures the success of a free and democratic Iraq.

The terrorists have a history of escalating their attacks before Iraq's major political milestones. Two key elections are fast approaching. As these milestones approach, we can expect there to be increasing violence from the terrorists. They can't stand elections. The thought of people voting is an anathema to them. You see, democracy and freedom are the exact opposite of what's in their mind, in their vision.

Next month the Iraqis will vote on a democratic constitution. If that constitution is approved, they will return to polls later this year to elect a fully constitutional government. The terrorists will fail. See, the Iraqis want to be free. They proved that last January when over 8 million citizens, in the face of violence and threats, voted. And the terrorists are going to fail this time. But we can expect they'll do everything in their power to try to stop the march of freedom. And our troops are ready for it.

I urge the Members of Congress to attend the briefings with General Abizaid and Casey. I urge them to ask questions about our efforts in Iraq and to listen carefully about the type of war we fight. The support of Congress for our troops and our mission is important, and Americans need to know about the gains we've made in recent weeks and months. They need to know the way we're adopting our tactics and the way we're changing our strategy to meet the needs on the ground.

As Members of Congress speak with Generals Abizaid and Casey, I'm confident they'll see what I see—our leaders, these two Generals are men of vision and determination, and it is their leadership that is helping bring victory in the war on terror.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:26 a.m. in the Rose Garden at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Gen. John P. Abizaid, USA, commander, U.S. Central Command; Gen. George W. Casey, Jr., USA, commanding general, Multi-National Force—Iraq; and senior Al Qaida associate Abu Musab Al Zarqawi. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of these remarks.

Message to the Senate Transmitting the Protocol Amending the France-United States Taxation Convention
September 28, 2005

To the Senate of the United States:

With a view to receiving the advice and consent of the Senate to ratification, I transmit herewith a Protocol Amending the Convention Between the Government of the United States of America and the Government of the French Republic for the Avoidance of Double Taxation and the Prevention of Fiscal Evasion with Respect to Taxes on Income and Capital, signed at Paris on August 31, 1994 (the "Convention"), signed at Washington on December 8, 2004 (the "Protocol"). Also transmitted for the information of the Senate is the report of the Department of State with respect to the Protocol.

The Protocol was negotiated to address certain technical issues that have arisen since the Convention entered into force. The Protocol was concluded in recognition of the importance of U.S. economic relations with France.

The Protocol clarifies the treatment of investments made in France by U.S. investors through partnerships located in the United States, France, or third countries. It also modifies the provisions of the treaty dealing with pensions and pension contributions in order to achieve parity given the two countries' fundamentally different pension systems. The Protocol makes other changes to the Convention to reflect more closely current U.S. tax treaty policy.

I recommend that the Senate give early and favorable consideration to this Protocol and that the Senate give its advice and consent to ratification.

GEORGE W. BUSH

The White House,
September 28, 2005.

Remarks at a Swearing-In Ceremony for John G. Roberts, Jr., as Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of the United States
September 29, 2005

The President. Good afternoon and welcome to the White House. Laura and I are pleased that all of you could join us in witnessing a very meaningful event in the life of our Nation. It's a rare privilege to welcome seven current Justices of the Supreme Court. Thank you all for coming. We also welcome Mrs. Thurgood Marshall and Mrs. Potter Stewart.

It was 19 years ago, almost to the day, that Chief Justice William Rehnquist took the oath of office in this very room with President Ronald Reagan as a witness. Each gathering of this kind is an historic occasion for our country and gives eloquent testimony to the wisdom and continuity of the system created by the Framers.

In a few moments, John Roberts will take his place in a distinguished line that began in 1789, when President Washington appointed Chief Justice John Jay. This is a proud day for John Roberts's family. We extend a special welcome to his wife, Jane, their daughter, Josie, and son, Jack—[*laughter*]—a fellow who is comfortable with the cameras. [*Laughter*] Also with us are the Judge's mom and dad, Rosemary and Jack Roberts; two of his sisters, Peggy and Barbara, as well as other members of

the Roberts family. We're so pleased you'd be with us today.

I appreciate the Vice President being here, Attorney General Al Gonzales. I thank Harriet Miers, Counsel to the President, and members of my administration who worked on the nomination and confirmation. I particularly want to thank former Senator Fred Thompson for his leadership. I thank the members of my Cabinet who are here.

I appreciate the Members of the United States Senate who are here, Majority Leader Bill Frist, Senate President Pro Tem Ted Stevens, and Majority Whip Mitch McConnell. Thank you all for coming. I thank the members of the Judiciary Committee who are here, starting with the chairman, Arlen Specter, ranking member Pat Leahy. Thank you all for coming. I appreciate Senators Grassley, Hatch, Brownback, Kyl, Sessions, Cornyn, and Graham. I also want to thank all the other Senators here with us. I really want to say something about Senator Dick Lugar from Indiana, who introduced the Chief to the Senate. I appreciate very much all of you taking time out of your day to witness this historic event.

Today we complete a process set forth in Article II of the Constitution, which provides that the President shall nominate and by and with the advice and consent of the Senate shall appoint the judges of the Supreme Court. The nomination power is one of the most serious responsibilities of a President. When a President chooses a Supreme Court Justice, he is placing in human hands the full authority and majesty of the law.

Each member of our highest court holds a position of extraordinary influence and respect, and can hold it for a lifetime. The office of Chief Justice has added responsibilities as leader of the Court and as presiding officer of the Judicial Conference of the United States. To carry out all these duties, I submitted to the Senate a nominee of integrity, deep humility, and uncommon talent.

During the confirmation hearings this month, Members of the Senate and American people saw far more than the intellectual gifts and broad experience of Judge John Roberts. They witnessed as well the character of the man, his reverence for the Constitution and laws of our country, his impartiality and devotion to justice, his modesty and great personal decency.

Across the Nation, Americans have grown in respect and admiration for this good man. From the day of Judge Roberts's nomination, the Judiciary Committee and Senators of both parties have received him with courtesy and fair mindedness. The civility of the confirmation process has served the interests of the Nation and reflected very well on the United States Senate.

And I appreciate the majority leader and the chairman and their colleagues for setting a tone of dignity and goodwill. The Senate has confirmed a man with an astute mind and kind heart. As a member of the Federal judiciary, John Roberts has carried out his duties with discernment and humanity and without fear or favor.

As Judge Roberts prepares to lead the judicial branch of Government, all Americans can be confident that the 17th Chief Justice of the United States will be prudent in exercising judicial power, firm in defending judicial independence, and above all, a faithful guardian of the Constitution.

With these qualities, the incoming Chief Justice will carry on in the tradition of his mentor and friend, the late William H. Rehnquist. I know that Chief Justice Rehnquist had hoped to welcome his former law clerk as a colleague. Although that was not meant to be, we are thinking of William Rehnquist today. The Nation honors his memory, and we remain grateful for his example of integrity and service.

In welcoming an exceptional new leader as Chief Justice, we also honor the Supreme Court itself, and we mark a day of renewal for one of the noblest institutions in our land. Judge Roberts, thank you

for agreeing to serve our country and for accepting this new call to duty.

And now I ask Senior Associate Justice of the Court, Justice John Paul Stevens, to please step forward and administer the oath.

[*At this point, Justice John Paul Stevens administered the oath of office.*]

Chief Justice Roberts. Thank you very much. Let me begin by thanking Justice John Paul Stevens for being here today. In December, Justice Stevens will mark 30 years of service on the Court. It's a great honor to take the oath from him, and it will be a great privilege for me to sit next to him on the bench on Monday.

Thank you, Mr. President, for nominating me. There is no way to repay the confidence you have shown in me, other than to do the best job I possibly can do, and I will try to do that every day. And thank you for the remarkable team that you assembled to assist me throughout this process. I benefitted greatly from the wisdom, judgment, and plain hard work of Ed Gillespie, Senator Thompson, Harriet Miers, Bill Kelley, and everyone on the team. I am very grateful to each and every one of them.

Chairman Specter, Senator Leahy, all the members of the Judiciary Committee, with this nomination, the Committee faced a very special challenge. And yet, working together, we met that challenge. We found a way to get Jack into the Committee room—[*laughter*]—introduced to the Committee and back out again without any serious crisis. [*Laughter*] Thank you.

More seriously, thank you very much for the conduct of the hearings, conducting them in a civil and dignified manner as the President requested on the night of the nomination. I appreciate it very much.

Senator Frist, other Members of the Senate, I view the vote this morning as confirmation of what is for me a bedrock principle, that judging is different from politics. And I appreciate the vote very much.

The process we have just completed epitomizes the separation of powers that is enshrined in our Constitution. My nomination was announced some 10 weeks ago here in the White House, the home of the executive branch. This morning, further up Pennsylvania Avenue, it was approved in the Capitol, the home of the executive [legislative] * branch. And tomorrow, I will go into the Supreme Court building to join my colleagues, the home of the judicial branch, to undertake my duties. The executive and the legislature have carried out their constitutional responsibilities and ensured the succession of authority and responsibility in the judicial branch.

What Daniel Webster termed "the miracle of our Constitution" is not something that happens every generation. But every generation in its turn must accept the responsibility of supporting and defending the Constitution and bearing true faith and allegiance to it. That is the oath that I just took. I will try to ensure, in the discharge of my responsibilities, that with the help of my colleagues, I can pass on to my children's generation a charter of self-government as strong and as vibrant as the one that Chief Justice Rehnquist passed on to us.

Over the past 10 weeks, many people who I did not know came up to me and offered encouragement and support. Many of them told me that I and my family was in their prayers and in their hopes. I want to thank all of those people. I will need in the months and years ahead that encouragement and those prayers.

Thank you, Mr. President. Thank you, Members of the Senate. And thank you, colleagues, for being here to share this special moment. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:54 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Cecilia Marshall, wife of former Justice Thurgood Marshall; Mary

* White House correction.

Ann Stewart, wife of former Justice Potter Stewart; John G. Roberts, Sr., and his wife, Rosemary Roberts, Chief Justice Roberts's parents; and Margaret "Peggy" Roberts and Barbara Burke, Chief Justice Roberts's sisters. Chief Justice Roberts referred to Edward W. Gillespie, founder and cochairman, Quinn Gillespie & Associates; and William Kelley, Deputy Counsel to the President.

Message to the Congress Giving Notification of Federal Payment for Emergency Planning and Security Costs in the District of Columbia
September 29, 2005

To the Congress of the United States:

Consistent with title I of the District of Columbia Appropriations Act, 2005, Public Law 108–335, I am notifying the Congress of the proposed use of $10,151,538 provided in title I under the heading "Federal Payment for Emergency Planning and Security Costs in the District of Columbia." This will reimburse the District for the costs of public safety expenses related to security events and responses to terrorist threats.

The details of this action are set forth in the enclosed letter from the Director of the Office of Management and Budget.

GEORGE W. BUSH

The White House,
September 29, 2005.

Remarks at the Farewell Tribute for General Richard B. Myers and Swearing-In for General Peter Pace as Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff in Arlington, Virginia
September 30, 2005

Thank you for the warm welcome. It is a pleasure to join you in paying tribute to a fine American and a superb Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, General Dick Myers. I'm glad to see the Myers family here: Dick's great wife, Mary Jo; their children, Rich, Nicole, and Erin; their grandchildren, Sophie and Cole. I know those grandkids are proud of their grandfather today; I want you to know, kids, you're joined by the Commander in Chief and the American people.

Today we also honor the outstanding Marine succeeding General Myers as the Chairman, General Pete Pace. I'm glad that Pete's family has joined us today: his wife, Lynne; their daughter, Tiffany; their son, Lieutenant Pete Pace; and the General's brothers, Tom and Simone; as well as his sister, Elizabeth and his mom, Doris.

I have come to know Pete Pace well during his time as the Vice Chairman. I appreciate his wisdom and commitment to serve, and I look forward to having Pete by my side in the years ahead.

I want to appreciate the Vice President for being here. Mr. Secretary, thank you very much for your continued strong leadership. I appreciate the Secretary of State, Condi Rice, joining us. I want to thank all the members of the administration who have come to pay tribute to this fine man and his wife. I particularly thank the President of the World Bank, Paul Wolfowitz,

who served with Dick Myers for 4 years at the Defense Department. I thank the members of the diplomatic corps who have joined us.

When I asked Dick Myers to take his job back in the summer of 2001, I knew we had some important things in common. We both made a good decision early in life when we married a teacher. We both flew fighter jets, although I never won the Grey Eagle Award. We both knew it would take all of our combined strength, energy, and resolve to defend the American people—and to keep up with Don Rumsfeld. [*Laughter*]

When General Myers was sworn in as the 15th Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff 4 years ago, he joined a long line of distinguished military leaders that stretches back to General Omar Bradley. Every Chairman faced difficult tests, yet none took up his duties under more demanding circumstances than Dick Myers. In his first week as the Chairman, we launched strikes on terrorist training camps in Afghanistan. By the middle of December, American troops and our allies had driven the Taliban from power, put Al Qaida on the run, and freed more than 25 million people. In other words, Dick had plenty to do in his first 10 weeks on the job.

We asked more of General Myers in the years that followed. He helped design a broad and innovative military strategy to win the war on terror. His leadership and flexibility were essential to the liberation of Iraq and to adapting our tactics to defeat the terrorists and help Iraqis build a peaceful democracy. General Myers forged strong relationships with his military counterparts around the world and helped unite more than 90 nations in the war on terror.

He also helped us prepare for the new threats of the 21st century by helping transform the NATO Alliance and making our Armed Forces lighter, more lethal, and more capable of conducting joint operations. And as he did all this, he led our military through a series of extraordinary humanitarian challenges, from tsunami relief in Asia to the rescue operations along the gulf coast in response to Hurricanes Katrina and Rita. General Myers brought skill and determination to all these tasks, and he leaves his post with a record of remarkable accomplishment.

Yet through every challenge, what stood out most about the Chairman was his total devotion to the men and women who wear the uniform. As he traveled the world, General Myers always made time to thank American forces serving in distant lands and to honor the sacrifice of military families here at home. He personally reenlisted service men and women in America and overseas. He advocated tirelessly for better pay and housing and benefits for our troops and their families. And he and Mary Jo made frequent visits to the wounded in military hospitals. General Myers often said how inspired he was by the selflessness and integrity and compassion of Americans in uniform. And he always inspired those under his command because they saw the same values in him.

I was reminded of Dick's convictions and ability every time he stepped in the Oval Office. As my principle military adviser, he brought a calm and reassuring presence, coupled with sound judgment and fresh thinking and unflinching candor. His approach was steady and practical. He had the vision to see the larger strategic picture and the tactical awareness one would expect from an experienced fighter pilot.

Over the past 4 years, I've also come to know General Myers's character and decency and his easy sense of humor. He's a kind and humble man who believes in serving a cause greater than himself. It says something that for all the medals on his chest and the stars on his shoulder, one of his proudest accomplishments came last summer when he was named National Father of the Year.

The General's qualities have long been known to those he works with. One of

Dick's former bosses described him this way, "He's a level-headed guy. He doesn't panic. He eats pressure for breakfast, and he doesn't have a personal agenda." General Tommy Franks called him a "solid anchor in the building." A former colleague said he knew Dick Myers was down to earth when he saw the four-star general standing in line at the Pentagon cafeteria. Those who served alongside General Myers admired the dignity and purpose he brought to the job, and they'll always be proud to know one of America's best Chairmen of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

Another of General Myers's many strengths is his ability to bring out the talents of those around him. For the past 4 years, he has encouraged and benefited from the superb work of all the Joint Chiefs, especially his Vice Chairman. General Pace has shown himself to be a brilliant thinker and an inspiring leader. His life is a story of the American Dream. From his early years in Brooklyn and New Jersey to his days as a Midshipman in Annapolis, to his decades of service in Vietnam and Thailand and South Korea and Somalia and elsewhere, in every place he has been, Pete Pace has impressed those around him with his bravery, his knowledge, and his devotion to duty.

As Chairman, his leadership will build on the vital work set into motion under General Myers. I look forward to witnessing his swearing-in and to calling him the first Marine ever to hold America's highest military office.

Forty years ago, Second Lieutenant Dick Myers left Manhattan, Kansas, with an Air Force commission and the beautiful wife he married in the university chapel. Over the decades, Dick soared into the wild blue yonder and climbed to the highest ranks of the United States Armed Forces. He led our military to historic achievements in some of the most trying times America has known, and today he retires with the pride and appreciation of our entire Nation.

General Myers, I want to thank you for a lifetime of service to the United States. You have done your part to build a more peaceful world for our children and our grandchildren, and we will always be grateful.

My God bless you and your family, and may God continue to bless the United States of America.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:41 on Summerall Field at Fort Myer. In his remarks, he referred to Gen. Tommy R. Franks, USA (Ret.), former commander, U.S. Central Command.

Message on the Observance of Rosh Hashanah, 5766
September 30, 2005

I send greetings to all those observing Rosh Hashanah.

On this holy occasion, Jews around the world are called by the sound of the Shofar to gather in celebration of the beginning of the New Year and the creation of all life. For the Jewish people, this marks the beginning of the Days of Awe, a special time to reflect on the past year and welcome the year to come.

It is also a time to reflect on the history of the Jewish people, from the days of Abraham to the present, and remember God's faithfulness to them. This year, we mark the completion of an especially joyous occasion, the 350th year of Jewish life in America. Throughout America's history, Jewish Americans have strengthened and enriched the character of our Nation.

Laura and I send our best wishes for a blessed Rosh Hashanah. *L'shanah tovah.*

GEORGE W. BUSH

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

The President's Radio Address
October 1, 2005

Good morning. This week I met with the generals who are overseeing our efforts in Iraq—Generals Abizaid and Casey—to discuss our strategy for victory. They updated me on the operations in Baghdad last weekend, in which Iraqi and coalition forces tracked down and killed the second most wanted Al Qaida leader in Iraq. This brutal killer was a top lieutenant of the terrorist Zarqawi. He was also one of the terrorists responsible for the recent wave of attacks in the Iraqi capital, which is part of the terrorist campaign to halt political progress in Iraq, by stopping this month's referendum on the Iraqi constitution.

Our strategy in Iraq is clear: We're hunting down deadly terrorist leaders. We're conducting aggressive counterterrorism operations in the areas where the terrorists are concentrated. We are constantly adapting our tactics to the changing tactics of the terrorists, and we're training more Iraqi forces to assume increasing responsibility for their country's security.

The growing size and increasing capability of the Iraqi security forces are helping our coalition address a challenge we have faced since the beginning of the war. It used to be that after we cleared the terrorists out of a city, there were not enough qualified Iraqi troops to maintain control. So if we left to conduct missions in other areas of Iraq, the terrorists would try to move back in. Now the increasing number of more capable Iraqi troops has allowed us to keep a better hold on the cities we have taken from the terrorists. The Iraqi troops know their people and their language, and they know who the terrorists are. By leaving Iraqi units in the cities we have cleared out, we can keep those cities safe, while moving on to hunt down the terrorists in other parts of the country.

We used this approach recently in Iraq's northwest region, where Iraqi and coalition forces targeted an area that was one of the main routes for foreign terrorists entering Iraq from Syria. During operations in the key town of Tall 'Afar, Iraqi security forces outnumbered coalition forces for the first time in a major offensive operation. Because of our joint efforts, hundreds of insurgents and terrorists have been killed or captured or flushed out, and our continued efforts will make it more difficult for foreign terrorists to enter Iraq.

As part of our strategy, Iraqi forces have stayed behind in Tall 'Afar to ensure that the terrorists cannot return and regroup. And coalition and Iraqi troops are pursuing the terrorists in western Iraq, working to deny Al Qaida a safe haven there and to stop terrorists from crossing into the country through Syria.

I'm encouraged by the increasing size and capability of the Iraqi security forces. Today, they have more than 100 battalions operating throughout the country, and our commanders report that the Iraqi forces are serving with increasing effectiveness. In fact, this week coalition forces were able to turn over security responsibility for one of Iraq's largest cities, Karbala, to Iraqi soldiers. As Iraqi forces show they're capable of fighting the terrorists, they are earning

the trust and confidence of the Iraqi people, which will ensure the success of a free and democratic Iraq.

More difficult and dangerous work still lies ahead. The terrorists have a history of escalating their attacks before Iraq's major political milestones, and two elections are fast approaching. In 2 weeks, Iraqis will vote on a democratic constitution, and if that constitution is approved, they will return to the polls later this year to elect a fully constitutional government.

As Iraqis take these next steps on the path to freedom and democracy, the terrorists will do everything they can to stop this progress and try to break our will. They will fail. Defeating the terrorists in Iraq will require more time and more sacrifice. Yet all Americans can have confidence in the military commanders who are leading the effort in Iraq and in the troops under their command. They have made important gains in recent weeks and months. They are adapting our strategy to meet the needs on the ground, and they're helping us to bring victory in the war on terror.

Thank you for listening.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:06 a.m. from the Oval Office at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Gen. John P. Abizaid, USA, commander, U.S. Central Command; Gen. George W. Casey, Jr., USA, commanding general, Multi-National Force—Iraq; and senior Al Qaida associate Abu Musab Al Zarqawi. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of this address.

Remarks Announcing the Nomination of Harriet E. Miers To Be an Associate Justice of the United States Supreme Court

October 3, 2005

In our great democracy, the Supreme Court is the guardian of our constitutional freedoms and the protector of our founding promise of equal justice under the law. Over the past 5 years, I've spoken clearly to the American people about the qualities I look for in a Supreme Court Justice. A Justice must be a person of accomplishment and sound legal judgment. A Justice must be a person of fairness and unparalleled integrity. And a Justice must strictly apply the Constitution and laws of the United States and not legislate from the bench.

This summer I nominated an individual to the High Court who embodies all these characteristics. And this morning our Nation can be proud when John Roberts opens a new Supreme Court session as the 17th Chief Justice of the United States.

It is now my duty to select a nominee to fill the seat that will be left vacant by the retirement of Justice Sandra Day O'Connor. Once again, I considered a wide variety of distinguished Americans from different walks of life. Once again, we consulted with Democrats and Republicans in the United States Senate. We received good advice from more than 80 Senators. And once again, one person stood out as exceptionally well suited to sit on the highest court of our Nation.

This morning I'm proud to announce that I am nominating Harriet Ellan Miers to serve as Associate Justice of the Supreme Court. For the past 5 years, Harriet Miers has served in critical roles in our Nation's Government, including one of the most important legal positions in the country, White House Counsel. She has devoted her life to the rule of law and the cause of justice. She will be an outstanding addition to the Supreme Court of the United States.

Harriet was born and raised in Dallas, Texas. She attended public schools. When illness struck her family during her freshman year in college, Harriet went to work to help pay for her own education. She went on to receive a bachelor's degree in mathematics and a law degree from Southern Methodist University.

Over the course of a distinguished legal career, Harriet has earned the respect and admiration of her fellow attorneys. She has a record of achievement in the law, as well as experience as an elected member of the Dallas City Council. She served at high levels of both State and Federal Government. Before State and Federal courts, she has tried cases and argued appeals that covered a broad range of matters. She's been a leader in the American Bar Association and has been recognized by the National Law Journal as one of the most powerful attorneys in America.

Harriet's greatest inspiration was her mother, who taught her the difference between right and wrong and instilled in Harriet the conviction that she could do anything she set her mind to. Inspired by that confidence, Harriet became a pioneer in the field of law, breaking down barriers to women that remained even after a generation—remained a generation after President Reagan appointed Justice O'Connor to the Supreme Court.

Harriet was the first woman to be hired at one of Dallas's top law firms, the first woman to become president of that firm, the first woman to lead a large law firm in the State of Texas. Harriet also became the first woman president of the Dallas Bar Association and the first woman elected president of the State Bar of Texas. In recognition of her achievements paving the way for women lawyers, Harriet's colleagues in Texas have honored her with numerous awards, most recently the Sandra Day O'Connor Award for professional excellence.

Harriet has built a reputation for fairness and integrity. When I came to office as the Governor of Texas, the Lottery Commission needed a leader of unquestioned integrity. I chose Harriet because I knew she would earn the confidence of the people of Texas. The Dallas Morning News said that Harriet insisted on a system that was fair and honest. She delivered results.

Harriet has also earned a reputation for her deep compassion and abiding sense of duty. In Texas, she made it her mission to support better legal representation for the poor and underserved. As president of the Dallas Bar, she called on her fellow lawyers to volunteer and staff free neighborhood clinics. She led by example. She put in long hours of pro bono work. Harriet Miers has given generously of her time and talent by serving as a leader with more than a dozen community groups and charities, including the Young Women's Christian Association, Child Care Dallas, Goodwill Industries, Exodus Ministries, Meals on Wheels, and the Legal Aid Society. Harriet's life has been characterized by service to others, and she will bring that same passion for service to the Supreme Court of the United States.

I've given a lot of thought to the kind of people who should serve on the Federal judiciary. I've come to agree with the late Chief Justice William Rehnquist, who wrote about the importance of having judges who are drawn from a wide diversity of professional backgrounds. Justice Rehnquist himself came to the Supreme Court without prior experience on the bench, as did more than 35 other men, including Byron White. And I'm proud to nominate an outstanding woman who brings a similar record of achievement in private practice and public service.

Under the Constitution, Harriet's nomination now goes before the United States Senate for confirmation. The American people expect Harriet's hearings to be handled with the same respect and civility that characterized the last three Supreme Court confirmations—those of Chief Justice Roberts, Justice Breyer, and Justice Ginsburg.

In its consideration of Chief Justice Roberts' nomination, the Senate made it clear that a well-qualified nominee, committed to strictly interpret the law, can be confirmed promptly and by a large bipartisan majority. As the new Chief Justice said at his swearing in last week, "The Senate vote affirmed the bedrock principle that judging is different from politics." I believe that Senators of both parties will find that Harriet Miers's talent, experience, and judicial philosophy make her a superb choice to safeguard the constitutional liberties and equality of all Americans.

Harriet Miers will strictly interpret our Constitution and laws. She will not legislate from the bench. I ask the Senate to review her qualifications, thoroughly and fairly, and to vote on her nomination promptly.

This morning I again thank Justice O'Connor for her 24 years of service on the Supreme Court, including some additional time that she had not planned on. In selecting a nominee, I've sought to find an American of grace, judgment, and unwavering devotion to the Constitution and laws of our country. Harriet Miers is just such a person.

I've known Harriet for more than a decade. I know her heart; I know her character. I know that Harriet's mother is proud of her today, and I know her father would be proud of her too. I'm confident that Harriet Miers will add to the wisdom and character of our judiciary when she is confirmed as the 110th Justice of the Supreme Court.

Harriet, thank you for agreeing to serve. Congratulations.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8:01 a.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of Associate Justice-designate Miers.

The President's News Conference
October 4, 2005

The President. Thank you. Good morning. Yesterday I nominated an outstanding individual to serve on the Supreme Court of the United States. Over the past three decades, Harriet Miers has built a stellar record of accomplishment in the law. She's been a model of service to our country and to our citizens. I've known her for more than 10 years. I know her character. She's a woman of principle and deep conviction. She shares my philosophy that judges should strictly interpret the laws and the Constitution of the United States and not legislate from the bench.

I appreciate the reception that Harriet has gotten on Capitol Hill. I expect the Senate to conduct fair hearings and to hold an up-or-down vote on Harriet's nomination by Thanksgiving.

Congress has got other important work to do, starting with our response to the Hurricanes Katrina and Rita. We here in Washington have got a vital role to play in the recovery and reconstruction efforts on the gulf coast. I've made that clear. I've also made it clear we must do so in a fiscally responsible way. Congress needs to pay for as much of the hurricane relief as possible by cutting spending. I'll work with Members of Congress to identify offsets to free up money for the reconstruction efforts. I will ask them to make even deeper reductions in the mandatory spending programs than are already planned. As Congress completes action on the 2006 appropriations bills, I call on Members to make real cuts in nonsecurity spending.

The heart of America is big enough to be generous and responsible at the same time. One of our most important obligations is to ensure that hundreds of thousands of students displaced by the storms can continue with their studies. Congress needs to provide assistance to States and local school districts that have taken these children in, whether the schools are public or private.

As the Federal Government meets its responsibilities, the people of the gulf coast must also recognize its limitations. The engine that drives growth and job creation in America is the private sector, and the private sector will be the engine that drives the recovery of the gulf coast. So I've outlined a set of policies to attract private investment to the affected areas, to encourage small business development, and to help workers in need get back on their feet. These policies are vital to our efforts to help the good folks who've suffered down there in Louisiana and Mississippi and Alabama. And I call on Congress to include these measures in the recovery legislation that they send to my desk.

The storms that hit our gulf coast also touched every American with higher prices at the gas pump. They highlighted a problem I've been talking about since I've come to Washington. We need more refining capacity. It ought to be clear to everybody that this country needs to build more refining capacity to be able to deal with the issues of tight supply. We haven't built a new refinery since the 1970s. And so I look forward to working with Congress to pass reasonable law that will allow current refiners to expand and to encourage the construction of new refineries.

We also got to continue to make sure we meet our obligations to prevent further terrorist attack. One of the most important, effective tools for safeguarding our country is the PATRIOT Act. This good law allows law enforcement officers to hunt down terrorists with many of the same tools they already use to fight organized crime and drug dealers. The PATRIOT Act is getting results. It's a positive piece of legislation. Parts of it are set to expire. Congress needs to recognize that terrorist threats won't expire, and so they need to send me a bill that reauthorizes the PATRIOT Act.

We've been through a lot, but there's no question in my mind that we're going to accomplish great things. We'll make this country more secure. We'll help the parts of our country that got destroyed rebuild. We'll keep this economy strong. The work of our Government goes on, and I'm looking forward to working with Members of Congress to meet our obligations and responsibilities.

With that, I'll be glad to take some questions. Tom [Tom Raum, Associated Press].

Associate Justice-Designate Harriet E. Miers

Q. Thank you, Mr. President. Mr. President, of all the people in the United States you had to choose from, is Harriet Miers the most qualified to serve on the Supreme Court?

The President. Yes. Otherwise I wouldn't have put her on.

Q. One——

The President. Let me—please. Please. I've known Harriet for over a decade. I've worked with Harriet. She's a woman of principle and character. She's highly intelligent. She has been a pioneer in the field of law in my State of Texas. She was the first woman hired by her law firm—first woman partner, I mean, by the law firm. She managed a law firm. She was the first head of the Dallas Bar—first woman to head the Dallas Bar, first woman to head the State Bar of Texas. She's an enormously accomplished person who's incredibly bright.

Secondly, she knows the kind of judge I'm looking for. After all, she was a part of the process that selected John Roberts. I don't want somebody to go on the bench to try to supplant the legislative process. I'm interested in people that will be strict constructionists, so we—and I've told that

to the American people ever since I started running for office. I said, "Vote for me. This is the kind of judges I'll put on the bench." And there should be no doubt in anybody's mind what I believe a judge—the philosophy of a judge. And Harriet Miers shares that philosophy.

Thirdly, I know her well enough to be able to say that she's not going to change, that 20 years from now she'll be the same person with the same philosophy that she is today. She'll have more experience. She'll have been a judge, but nevertheless, her philosophy won't change. And that's important to me. It was important to me when I picked Chief Justice Roberts. It's important for me in picking Harriet Miers.

Finally, I got some interesting suggestions. I actually listen to the Senators when they bring forth ideas, and they brought forth some really interesting ideas during the course of our conversations, some told me directly, many brought to me by people on my staff. And one of the most interesting ideas I heard was, "Why don't you pick somebody who hasn't been a judge? Why don't you reach outside the," I think one Senator said, the "judicial monastery."

I thought it was an interesting idea, and I thought long and hard about it. I obviously looked at whether or not other Presidents had done—made that decision. They had. And so, recognizing that Harriet will bring not only expertise but a fresh approach, I nominated her. And she'll be a really good judge. And as I said, I appreciate the reception she's gotten at Capitol Hill. After all, they're going to—they'll decide.

Adam [Adam Entous, Reuters].

Q. Thank you, Mr. President. Some conservatives have said that you did not pick someone like Scalia and Thomas because you shied away from a battle with the Democrats. Is there any truth to that? And are you worried about charges of cronyism?

The President. Well, I just described to you why I picked Harriet. I'd be glad to go over it again if you like. In other words, she's eminently qualified. She shares my judicial philosophy. She is a pioneer when it comes to the law. She's an extraordinary woman.

The decision as to whether or not there will be a fight is up to the Democrats. They get to decide whether or not the special interests will decide the tone of the debate. Look, I'm upbeat about the tone of the hearings but—except I'm mindful of the fact that somebody as eminently as qualified as John Roberts did have half the Democrat caucus voted against him.

I picked the best person I could find. People are going to be amazed at her strength of character and her intellect. But the tone will be set by the people who conduct the hearings and give the speeches and run the television ads. When it's all said and done, the American people are going to know what I know, though: This woman deserves to be on the bench, and she'll be credit—and she'll bring credit to the bench and to the law.

Q. The issue of cronyism?

The President. I just answered. I picked the best person I could find. People know we're close. But you got to understand, because of our closeness, I know the character of the person. It's one thing to say a person can read the law—and that's important—and understand the law. But what also matters, Adam, is the intangibles. To me, a person's strength of character counts a lot. And as a result of my friendship with Harriet, I know her strength of character.

It's important to me—again, I'll repeat to you: I don't want to put somebody on the bench who is this way today and changes. That's not what I'm interested in. I'm interested in finding somebody who shares my philosophy today and will have that same philosophy 20 years from now. And after spending a lot of time thinking about this nomination, there's no doubt in my mind that's the way Harriet Miers—there's no doubt in my mind it's the way Chief Justice John Roberts is as well.

Q. Thank you, Mr. President. You've taken time to express that you know her heart, her character; you've emphasized your friendship. So it seems reasonable that over the course of the years you've known her, perhaps you have discussed the issue of abortion. Have you ever discussed with Harriet Miers, abortion? Or have you gleaned from her comments her views on that subject?

The President. I have no litmus test. It's also something I've consistently said: There is no litmus test. What matters to me is her judicial philosophy: what does she believe the role—the proper role of the judiciary is, relative to the legislative and the executive branch. And she'll be asked all kinds of questions up there, but the most important thing for me is, what kind of judge will she be? And so there's no litmus test.

Q. Sir, you've already said there was no litmus test——

The President. Correct. And I'll say it again: There is no litmus test.

Q. But she is not someone you interviewed for the job that you didn't know. You've known her a long time. Have you never discussed abortion with her?

The President. In my interviews with any judge, I never ask their personal opinion on the subject of abortion.

Q. In your friendship with her, you've never discussed abortion?

The President. Not to my recollection have I ever sat down with her—what I have done is understand the type of person she is and the type of judge she will be.

John [John Roberts, CBS News].

Training Iraqi Troops

Q. Mr. President, thank you, sir. A couple of weeks ago, you stood here in the Rose Garden with Generals Abizaid and Casey, and you cited the accomplishments regarding the standing up of Iraqi troops there. You said that there were 12 battalions that were working out of Fallujah and the western part, 20 in Baghdad, 100 across the nation. And then that afternoon, Abizaid and Casey went up to Capitol Hill and said, "Well, there's one battle-ready battalion," which led some Republican Senators to say, "Well, the situation is getting worse." So the question is, sir, it appears, between what you said and what they said, something is not adding up here.

The President. Well, what is happening in Iraq is the following: More and more Iraqis are able to take the fight to the enemy. And that's important to achieve our goal, and the goal is for a stable, democratic Iraq that is an ally in the war on terror.

Right now there are over 80 army battalions fighting alongside coalition troops. Over 30 Iraqi—I say, "army battalions"—Iraqi army battalions. There are over 30 Iraqi battalions in the lead, and that is substantial progress from the way the world was a year ago.

Success in Iraq is really important for our future, and to succeed in Iraq we have a dual-track strategy. On the one hand, there's a political strategy, a constitutional process and then elections in December. And the other one is the security strategy that you described.

American troops are—have got two missions. One is to track down the Zarqawis and his affiliates and bring them to justice. We had success doing that, as you might recall, with the fellow in Baghdad. And the second mission is to train Iraqis, and we've got several ways we're doing that. One is, obviously, kind of your basic training route. The other is to embed our troops with Iraqi forces to teach them not only how to fight but how to have a proper command and control structure.

Remember a Rose Garden press conference a while back—I think it was a Rose Garden press conference—where you might have asked me this very type of question. I said one of the concerns we have is the capacity of the Iraqis to develop command and control. In other words, it's one thing to have people able to march;

it's another thing to have the capacity to send them into battle in an organized way. One of the things that our folks measure is whether or not that's taking place. And the answer is, there is progress. There's obviously more work to be done, more units to be stood up, but we've got, as I said, over 30 battalions in the lead, and that's positive progress.

Terry [Terry Moran, ABC News].

Federal Budget

Q. Mr. President, you presided over the largest increase in the size, the power, and the cost of the Federal Government since Lyndon Baines Johnson. A lot of your supporters are wondering what's so conservative about that? And can you answer them and tell the American people, given the budget deficit, the cost of the war, the cost of Katrina, specifically—by naming a specific program or revenue measure—how you're going to pay for all this?

The President. First, let me remind people that we are at war. And I have pledged to the American people and, more importantly, the troops and their families, we'll make sure they have what it takes to succeed.

Secondly, when it comes to discretionary spending, nonsecurity discretionary spending, the budget I submitted to the United States Congress actually reduces nondiscretionary—discretionary, nonsecurity spending. And as a matter of fact, if you look at the trend line for nonsecurity discretionary spending, I think it was 6 percent when I first was elected. It's down to negative now.

Secondly, I have addressed the issue of mandatory spending, and this is an area where I believe we can find substantial offsets to help pay for ongoing Katrina operations or Rita operations. As a matter of fact, we proposed $187 billion in cuts over a 10-year period of time, that Congress has looked at. Some of that—I would ask them to look at all of the $187 billion. We proposed to eliminate or streamline 150 programs in the budget process, saving about $20 billion this year. I would ask them to make sure, as they consider the budget, that they take a look at those 150 programs.

One of my concerns is that, as they begin to move their appropriations bills, that the appropriations bills don't strictly adhere to the budgets we've agreed to. And there's another area we can show fiscal responsibility.

And in the long run, there's two big issues looming that are budgetary issues. One—and these are the unfunded liabilities inherent in the mandatory programs of Social Security and Medicare. And as you know, I've advocated the need for people to come together to address the Social Security issue. It's an issue that's not going to go away. And I'll continue to talk about it. There seems to be a diminished appetite in the short term, but I'm going to remind people that there is a long-term issue that we must solve, not only for the sake of the budget but, more importantly, for the sake of younger workers who are going to either have to pay a ton of money in order to justify current benefits or to take a look at the underlying causes of the growth of benefits and do something about it—show some political courage.

Conservative Philosophy

Q. Are you still a conservative?

The President. Am I what?

Q. Still a conservative?

The President. Am I still a conservative? Proudly so. Proudly so.

Let's see—Bob [Bob Franken, Cable News Network].

Disclosure of CIA Employee's Identity

Q. Mr. President, as we hop around here, let me move to the Valerie Plame investigation, which many people believe is coming to a close. As you know, some top members of your administration have been named as part of that investigation. Is it

your intention, if anybody in your administration is indicted, to remove that person from your administration?

The President. I am mindful of the investigation. I'll remind you what I said last time I was asked about this: I'm not going to talk about it until the investigation is complete. And it's important that the investigation run its course.

Q. If you won't talk about it, sir——

The President. I think—let's just let the process run its course.

Let's see here. Elisabeth [Elisabeth Bumiller, New York Times].

Federal Response to Hurricane Katrina

Q. Thank you, Mr. President. You said at the time of Hurricane Katrina that you were dissatisfied with your administration's response. You've had some time to think about it now. Is there anything that you yourself, personally, could have done or would have done differently now?

The President. You know, look, as I said the other day, to the extent that the Federal Government fell down on the job, I take responsibility. And I command a large, vast administration, and people I put in place, I take responsibility for the decisions they made. One area where I hope the country takes a look at is the responsibility between Federal, State, and local government when it comes to catastrophic events, highly catastrophic events. In other words, is there a need to move Federal assets more quickly, in spite of laws on the books that may discourage that? That's an area where I think we ought to take a good, hard look.

We have taken a look at FEMA. We've made decisions inside of FEMA. We're continuing to take a look at FEMA to make sure FEMA is capable of dealing with an emergency of this size. And so there's a lot of analysis going on, not only to the response in the immediacy of the hurricane but continuing to analyze to make sure our response is a wise response.

Q. But you yourself, sir, anything you could have done?

The President. I'll take responsibility—I'll take all the responsibility for the failures at the Federal level.

Let's see. April [April Ryan, American Urban Radio Networks].

Race and Poverty/2008 Elections

Q. Thank you, Mr. President. Mr. President, the Bible speaks of good will towards "the least of these." With that, how are you going to bridge the divide of poverty and race in this country beyond economics and homeownership, that after Hurricane Katrina and also the Bill Bennett statements? And also, how can the Republican Party gain the black vote—more of the black vote in 2008, after these public relations fiascos?

The President. Well, first of all, I happen to believe that economics has a lot to do with bridging divides. You mentioned poverty, and there is a divide in our country when it comes to wealth. And one way to bridge that divide is to encourage economic growth, vitality, jobs that pay well, and small business. You can't divorce bridging divides, April, from economic vitality; you just can't. It's a part of how we enable people to realize dreams—by having a growing economy.

Secondly, I don't think you can divorce bridging divides from ownership. In other words, I think it's essential that people own something if they're going to have a stake in the future of the country. I think part of the divide occurs because some people own a home and others don't. I think there's something so powerfully healing about a society in which more and more people have ownership.

Thirdly, education is a vital part of bridging divides. As you know, I came to Washington intent upon challenging a system which, in my view, too often gave up on children; that said, "Let's don't measure, and let's just move them through." It's a system that let a lot of families down, but

more importantly, let a lot of children down. I think education is one of the keys to addressing the issue of divides in our country. So the No Child Left Behind Act, which challenges what I've called the soft bigotry of low expectations, is beginning to make good results. You know why? Because we measure.

I think it's important for us to continue to allow faith-based programs to interface with people to help them have hope. One of the most important initiatives I laid out was the mentoring program for children whose parents may be in prison.

And so you address the racial divide in a variety of ways. And, obviously, the tone matters, from leadership. It matters what leaders say. It matters that somebody, first of all, understands there's a problem and is willing to talk about it. And I will continue to do so as the President.

Q. What about 2008 and the Republican Party?

The President. 2008? My head is not there yet. I'm right here in 2005.

Q. The Republican Party is trying to gain more of the black vote——

The President. Just got to keep asking for the vote. First of all, the Republican Party should never take a vote for granted, and neither should the Democrat Party. And therefore, that means you've got to go out and work hard for the vote and talk about what you believe. And I try to do so, with not a lot of success, although I improved. But I was disappointed, frankly, in the vote I got in the African American community; I was. I've done my best to elevate people to positions of authority and responsibility—not just positions, but positions where they can actually make a difference in the lives of people. I put people in my Cabinet; I put people in my sub-Cabinet. I've elevated people from all walks of life, because I believe there's a responsibility for the President to reach out. And so it's not a matter of tone; it's also a matter of action—and just got to keep working at it, April.

Wendell [Wendell Goler, FOX News Channel].

Hurricane Katrina Recovery

Q. Mr. President, shortly after Hurricane Katrina hit and we saw the ugly pictures from New Orleans, you said that the results of the response were unacceptable. Are the results acceptable yet, sir? Are people getting the aid they need as fast as they need to get it?

The President. In some cases, we've done a good job of getting $2,000 to people. And in some cases, there's—probably do a better job of getting temporary housing to people. We're dealing with a storm of a massive scale in which millions of people left their homes—over a million people left their homes.

I think that the notion of helping people immediately worked pretty good. It worked good because the Government responded with the checks. It also worked really good because our individual citizens responded in an incredibly generous and compassionate way.

You know, I'm not so sure—I'm not through yet. I'm not so sure how history will judge the movement of people, but I suspect it's going to be—when we actually take an objective look at what took place, people will be amazed at what happened and how it happened. And the responses of thousands of citizens to take in strangers—that's kind of the untold story. I know you've kind of looked at it, but deep down there's a richer story to be told.

There's always going to be frustrations in the immediate aftermath of a storm. I remember going down there and talking to those mayors in Mississippi, that—and the county folks that were just overwhelmed. You're looking at a mayor of Gulfport, Mississippi, who had been in office for 2 months, and that city was obliterated—just gone. Pascagoula, Mississippi, the mayor of that city had been mayor for 2 months—a young guy, you know, wanted to serve his community. The first thing that

came to his desk was the fact that his city got wiped out.

And there was the initial shock. And then there was the reaction about, "How about getting this debris removed?" And there was some bureaucracy, some rules that prevented the debris getting removed right off the bat. And I'll explain why, if you're interested. Okay, now that you're interested, I'll tell you: Because they didn't want to be moving federally paid dozers on private property. Imagine cleaning up the debris and a person shows up and says, "Where's my valuable china?" Or, "Where's my valuable art?"

So we had to work through all this. The frustration level was building. But we came up with an accord that allowed for the Federal Government to pay for debris removal off private property. It took awhile and there were a lot of frustrations, Wendell, but the fact that we were able to gather the problem and respond to it was positive, and that's what continues on.

My own judgment, as I said earlier, is that obviously there's a Federal role, but the true engine for growth is going to be the private sector. That's where things are going to happen in an expeditious way. That's where you'll find a lot of hope and opportunity that will develop. I mean, there's going to be a lot of construction jobs. And the fundamental question is: Do we have the wherewithal and the skill to train people to do the jobs that will exist? You've got people that may not—were—able to be electricians. But we have an opportunity to train them to become an electrician, because that's where the jobs will be.

So we're constantly—what I'm telling you is we're constantly dealing with problems as they arise, Wendell, from one of the largest storms in the Nation's history. And we're trying to make it as even a response as possible.

Baker [Peter Baker, Washington Post]. You're next.

Associate Justice-Designate Miers

Q. Thank you, Mr. President. You said several times now, sir, that you don't want a Justice who will be different 20 years from now than she is today. Given that standard, I wonder in hindsight whether you think the appointment of Justice David Souter, then, was a mistake? And even——

The President. You're trying to get me in trouble with my father, Baker. [*Laughter*]

Q. Well, I'm trying to understand what informed your choice this time?

The President. Call him. [*Laughter*] Go ahead. Sorry to interrupt you.

Q. Well, the second part of my question is: If there's no litmus test, regardless of who serves on the Supreme Court, would you like to see the Supreme Court overturn *Roe* v. *Wade*?

The President. You know, I'm not going to interject that kind of issue in the midst of these hearings. Harriet Miers will stand on her own. I made my position very clear in the course of my campaigns: My position—and I'm a pro-life President. Harriet Miers is going to go up to the Senate, and they're going to look at her and determine whether or not she's got the temperament, the intelligence, and the philosophy to be an excellent Supreme Court judge. And she will be—she will be.

Stretch [Richard Keil, Bloomberg News].

Disclosure of CIA Employee's Identity

Q. Thank you, Mr. President. Getting back to the leak investigation just for a moment, I'm curious, sir, whether you've had any conversations with any of your aides, particularly Karl Rove or Scooter Libby, about any of their dealings with reporters poking around on that issue and any strategy that they may have come up with to deal with that issue.

The President. The special prosecutor made it very clear early in the process that those of us in the White House need not—need—should not discuss the case, publicly or privately.

Ed [Ed Chen, Los Angeles Times].

Legislative Priorities

Q. Good morning, Mr. President. Sir, you've talked about a lot of priorities you still would like to see enacted. But Congress is now facing its own elections and reelections a year from now; you're not. To what extent is this divergence of interests—how does that scramble your agenda? And I guess I'm asking, how much political capital have you got left in your——

The President. Plenty.

Q. What do you want to——

The President. Plenty. I'm going to spend it in the short term on getting a budget out that is fiscally responsible, one that decreases nonsecurity discretionary spending—actually decreases it, not increases it. Secondly, I will continue to work with Congress to make sure our soldiers have what they need to win the war on terror. We're making good progress in Iraq, and Iraq is a part of the war on terror. That's what the American people need to understand. That's what General Abizaid made clear when he came back from the theater. He recognized that Iraq is a part of a larger global struggle. And we got to win in Iraq, and we will win in Iraq.

Obviously, I've talked about energy. I want to make sure that Congress continues to focus on energy. Listen, we got a—the storm created a short-term problem, and that is, when they shut down refineries, it creates a bubble in the system. Now, one of the things I did was, I suspended all blending rules, in order to be able to more likely import foreign gasoline. And that helped make up the difference between the refinery capacity shutdown and the demands of the American people. But there's a bubble moving through the system, and one way to deal with it is to be wise about how we use energy.

So another way to deal with it is to recognize we've got tight energy supplies. And one way to deal with tight energy supplies is to increase supply, and the only way to increase supply is to build refineries. Again, I repeat to you this amazing fact: We have not built a new refinery in America since the 1970s. And then we had the storm, and it took refinery capacity off, and guess what happens? It creates a tight supply situation, which causes price to go up. So Congress needs to deal with that. And I repeat, they need to get the PATRIOT Act to my desk.

So we have a short-term agenda that we're dealing with, that have got consequences for the long term. And once we get this part of the session over with, I, of course, will be preparing a State of the Union address for '06 that will call upon Congress to work to achieve much of what we've talked about here, but some new ideas as well. But right now, let's just get the business of the Congress done, now.

Q. So Social Security is off until next year, sir?

The President. Well, Social Security, for me, is never off. It's a long-term problem that's going to need to be addressed. When the appetite to address it is—that's going to be up to the Members of Congress. I just want to remind people, it's not going away. It's not one of these issues, well, if we don't deal with it now, maybe it will fix itself. It gets worse over time, not better. And I did make some progress convincing the American people there was a problem. And I'm going to continue talking about the problem because I strongly believe that the role of those of us in Washington, one role, is to confront problems. That's what we've got to do.

Yes, ma'am.

Response to Pandemic/Avian Flu

Q. Mr. President, you've been thinking a lot about pandemic flu and the risks in the United States if that should occur. I was wondering, Secretary Leavitt has said that first-responders in the States and local governments are not prepared for something like that. To what extent are you concerned about that after Katrina and Rita?

And is that one of the reasons you're interested in the idea of using defense assets to respond to something as broad and long lasting as a flu might be?

The President. Yes. Thank you for the question. I am concerned about avian flu. I am concerned about what an avian flu outbreak could mean for the United States and the world. I am—I have thought through the scenarios of what an avian flu outbreak could mean. I tried to get a better handle on what the decisionmaking process would be by reading Mr. Barry's book on the influenza outbreak in 1918. I would recommend it.

The policy decisions for a President in dealing with an avian flu outbreak are difficult. One example: If we had an outbreak somewhere in the United States, do we not then quarantine that part of the country, and how do you then enforce a quarantine? When—it's one thing to shut down airplanes; it's another thing to prevent people from coming in to get exposed to the avian flu. And who best to be able to effect a quarantine? One option is the use of a military that's able to plan and move.

And so that's why I put it on the table. I think it's an important debate for Congress to have. I noticed the other day, evidently, some Governors didn't like it. I understand that. I was the commander in chief of the National Guard, and proudly so, and, frankly, I didn't want the President telling me how to be the commander in chief of the Texas Guard. But Congress needs to take a look at circumstances that may need to vest the capacity of the President, to move beyond that debate. And one such catastrophe, or one such challenge could be an avian flu outbreak.

Secondly—wait a minute, this is an important subject. Secondly, during my meetings at the United Nations, not only did I speak about it publicly, I spoke about it privately to as many leaders as I could find, about the need for there to be awareness, one, of the issue; and, two, reporting, rapid reporting to WHO, so that we can deal with a potential pandemic. The reporting needs to be not only on the birds that have fallen ill but also on tracing the capacity of the virus to go from bird to person to person. That's when it gets dangerous, when it goes bird-person-person. And we need to know on a real-time basis, as quickly as possible, the facts, so that the scientific community, the world scientific community can analyze the facts and begin to deal with it.

Obviously, the best way to deal with a pandemic is to isolate it and keep it isolated in the region in which it begins. As you know, there's been a lot of reporting of different flocks that have fallen ill with the H5N1 virus. And we've also got some cases of the virus being transmitted to person, and we're watching very carefully.

Thirdly, the development of a vaccine—I've spent time with Tony Fauci on the subject. Obviously, it would be helpful if we had a breakthrough in the capacity to develop a vaccine that would enable us to feel comfortable, here at home, that not only would first-responders be able to be vaccinated, but as many Americans as possible, and people around the world. But, unfortunately, there is a—we're just not that far down the manufacturing process. And there's a spray, as you know, that can maybe help arrest the spread of the disease, which is in relatively limited supply.

So one of the issues is, how do we encourage the manufacturing capacity of the country and maybe the world, to be prepared to deal with the outbreak of a pandemic? In other words, can we surge enough production to be able to help deal with the issue?

I take this issue very seriously, and I appreciate you bringing it to our attention. The people of the country ought to rest assured that we're doing everything we can. We're watching it. We're careful. We're in communications with the world. I'm not predicting an outbreak; I'm just suggesting to you that we better be thinking about

it. And we are. And we're more than thinking about it; we're trying to put plans in place. And one of the plans—back to where your original question came—was, if we need to take some significant action, how best to do so. And I think the President ought to have all options on the table, to understand what the consequences are, but—all assets on the table—not options—assets on the table to be able to deal with something this significant.

Deborah [Deborah Orin, New York Post]. Thanks. Good to see you. Mic, please.

Associate Justice-Designate Miers

Q. Thank you.

The President. Unless you don't want to be heard in New York, your question.

Q. Well, there's always that possibility. Many conservative women lawyers have expressed their extreme distress that you chose as a woman nominee for the Court someone whose credentials did not come close, in their view, to the credentials of John Roberts. They feel as though it's kind of old-fashioned affirmative action—women don't have the same credentials. I wonder if you could address that.

The President. Sure, thanks. I would ask them to watch the hearings of Harriet Miers. I think they will become as impressed with her as I have become. She is plenty bright. She—as I mentioned earlier, she was a pioneer in Texas. She just didn't kind of opine about things. She actually led: first woman of the Texas Bar Association; first woman of the Dallas Bar Association; first woman partner of her law firm; she led a major law firm. She was consistently rated as one of the top 50 women lawyers in the United States—not just one year, but consistently rated that way—and as one of the top 100 lawyers.

Secondly, I can understand people not knowing Harriet. She hasn't been one of these publicity hounds. She's been somebody who just quietly does her job. But when she does it, she performs, see. She's not a person—in Texas—saying, "Look at me; look at how stellar I have been." She just did it and quietly, quietly established an incredibly strong record.

And I know her. I know her heart. I know what she believes. Remember, she was part of the search committee that helped pick Roberts. In other words, she went through the deliberations and the—talking to these different candidates about what they believe. She knows exactly the kind of judge I'm looking for. And I know exactly the kind of judge she'll be, which is an excellent judge.

And so I know people are jumping to all kinds of conclusions, and that's fine; that's part of our process, you know. People are quick to opine. The thing I appreciate is that she's gotten a good reception on the United States Senate. People can opine all they want, but the final opinion is on the floor of the United States Senate. That's where it's going to be decided whether or not she is a Supreme Court judge.

And I'm hopeful she'll get confirmed. I certainly don't want to prejudge the Senators. Somebody asked me about trying to avoid conflict. That's up to them to decide how they're going to treat this good woman. That's up to them, if they're going to be willing to give her a fair look at her credentials, and to listen carefully to her view of what it means to be a judge. That's up to them to make that decision. It's up to them to decide whether or not they want to reject all the special-interest money that seems to want to try to influence the outcome of certain issues here in Washington, DC. It's up to them if they want to bring dignity to the process. I will assure you this: Harriet Miers will bring dignity to the bench.

Ann [Ann Compton, ABC News]. Ann, first.

Executive Privilege/Associate Justice-Designate Miers

Q. Following up on that, for 10 years you've been on the receiving end of paperwork from Harriet Miers, but the rest of the American people haven't seen either her command of constitutional issues or her philosophy. Will you release some of her, or the bulk of her White House legal work, and not claim executive privilege?

The President. Listen, there is a lot of—first of all, this is part of the Roberts debate. People talked about executive privilege and documents. Secondly, it is important that we maintain executive privilege in the White House. That's part of the deliberative process. That's how I'm able to get good, sound opinions from people.

And so, you know, I'm sure they're going to try to bring this up. I happen to view it as—as a distraction from whether or not Harriet Miers is capable of answering the questions she's asked. She can—all the questions they want. It's a distraction from whether or not she will be a good judge.

But we—this part of the process was part of the Roberts process. We handled this issue, and I just can't tell you how important it is for us to guard executive privilege in order for there to be crisp decision-making in the White House.

John [John McKinnon, Wall Street Journal]. Yes, you.

Federal Reserve Chairman

Q. Thank you, sir. It may be a little early for this, but now that you've gotten your deliberations for the Supreme Court vacancy out of the way, can you talk about the process you're going to use for determining the next Chairman of the Federal Reserve?

The President. Yes. It's ongoing, by the way. There is a group of people inside the White House who are bringing forth, or who will bring forth nominees. These are people that—the nominees will be people that, one, obviously, can do the job; and secondly, will be independent. It's important that whomever I pick is viewed as an independent person from politics. It's this independence of the Fed that gives people not only here in America but the world, confidence.

And so there's an ongoing process, John, right now. I, frankly, haven't seen any—personally haven't seen any names yet, because part of the process is to surface some names internally. But also, part of the process is to reach outside the White House and solicit opinions. And I'll name the person at an appropriate time.

Holly [Holly Bailey, Newsweek].

Financial Disclosure/Government Ethics

Q. Thank you, Mr. President. As you know, ethics has been the hot topic here in Washington. I wonder, as a matter of principle, do you believe that it is ever okay for a member of your administration or a Member of Congress to accept free gifts or travel from lobbyists?

The President. Let me answer your question this way: It's not acceptable for any member of my administration to break the law. And I presume free gifts from lobbyists break the law. And there's all kind of reporting requirements, and I expect my people to adhere to the—people that work here to adhere to the—to what's expected of them.

Joe [Joseph Curl, Washington Times].

Associate Justice-Designate Miers

Q. Thank you, sir. You said a few minutes ago that you're proudly conservative, but there was a lot of hand-wringing when you made your nomination yesterday on Harriet Miers. Bill Kristol said he was "depressed and demoralized," and Rush Limbaugh said it was a "nomination out of weakness." What do you say to these critics, specifically, and how can you convince them that she is as conservative as Justices Scalia and Thomas?

The President. I guess I'll start over. I hope they're listening. First, she's a woman of enormous accomplishment. She is—she

understands the law. She's got a keen mind. She will not legislate from the bench. I also remind them that I think it's important to bring somebody from outside the system, the judicial system, somebody that hasn't been on the bench, and therefore, there's not a lot of opinions for people to look at.

Harriet Miers will testify. There's going to be a lot of attention paid to her testimony. First of all, she will go meet with the Senators, individually, and then she'll answer questions. And people will get to see not only her strength of character but will get a sense of her judicial philosophy. I'm hopeful she'll get confirmed, and then they'll get to read her opinions. And what I believe and what I know is important, is that she doesn't change over the course of time. And had I thought she would change, I wouldn't put her on there.

And I recognize that if you pick somebody from outside the judicial system—in other words, you pick somebody that's not a judge and they didn't—hadn't written a lot of opinions—then people are going to guess, and they're going to speculate. I don't have to guess and speculate about Harriet. I know her character. I know her strength. I know her talent, and I know she's going to be a fine judge.

Bill [William Douglas, Newsday].

Steroid Use in Professional Sports

Q. Thank you, Mr. President. You've spoken a lot today about knowing Ms. Miers and knowing her history and knowing what she's about. Earlier this summer, you stood up for Rafael Palmeiro when you were asked about whether or not you thought he took steroids, and then he tested positive. Do you think he should face perjury charges?

The President. I think that steroids ought to be banned from baseball. And Jackson asked me—sitting right over there—about his statement, and I said I believed him when he testified. But let me be very clear about this: Steroids ought to be banned from baseball. And I'm sure the Congress will look as to whether or not he broke the law.

Richard [Richard Benedetto, USA Today].

President's Approval Rating/President's Agenda

Q. Mr. President——

The President. Yes.

Q. ——in our latest poll——

The President. The what?

Q. In our latest poll——

The President. Latest poll? [*Laughter*]

Q. Yes, our latest poll.

The President. Okay.

Q. I know you don't pay attention to polls, but, anyway, in our latest poll——

The President. You run one every other day. [*Laughter*]

Q. I know.

The President. You mean yesterday's poll as opposed to tomorrow's poll? Go ahead. It's a good way to fill space, Richard. [*Laughter*]

Q. It is. Eighty-five percent of the Republicans approve of the job you're doing, but only 15 percent of the Democrats approve of the job you're doing. What is it about that the Democrats find so objectionable?

The President. Ask the pollsters. My job is to lead and to solve problems.

I will continue to articulate as best I can the stakes in Iraq. Iraq is a part of a global war on terror. We're facing people who have got a vision of the world which is opposite of ours. I know I've said that endlessly, and I will continue to say it because I know it's true. And they have designs. They like the idea of being able to find safe haven in a country like Afghanistan so they can plot attacks. They like the idea of killing innocent people to shake our will; that's what they're trying to do. We're not leaving Iraq. We will succeed in Iraq.

Secondly, I've got a job to help promote economic vitality. And I was pleased to see

the manufacturing report was strong yesterday. But, clearly, we've got some challenges when it comes to energy, and there are two ways to address the energy issue. One is through better conservation and encouraging technologies, to change how we use energy, and, secondly, to increase supply of energy. One place we need to increase supply is through the refineries; another place we need to do so is through safe nuclear power.

I had an interesting opportunity to go see some research and development being done on solar energy. I'm convinced, someday in the relative near future, we'll be able to have units on our houses that will be able to power electronics within our houses and hopefully, with excess energy, be able to feed them back in the system. That's possible. We're not there yet, but it's coming.

Thirdly, I've got a—we've got to deal with Katrina in a fiscally sound way. And I repeat what I said before: The engine of growth in these areas that have been destroyed is going to be the private sector. And therefore, Congress ought to get a bill to my desk that I can sign that encourages investment. If you want the private sector to thrive, there is a way to do so, and that is to provide tax incentives to people. It's amazing what happens when there is proper tax incentive to encourage investment.

And so these are issues that we're dealing with. And, you know, I'm dealing with them on behalf of everybody. And I'll let you all sort out the politics. My job is to lead this Congress as best I possibly can, to deal with the big problems that we face. And there's no doubt in my mind that we'll succeed in Iraq and lay the foundation for peace for generations to come. There's no doubt in my mind, this country that puts its mind to it can put energy policy in place that makes sense, that will help continue this economic growth of ours.

There's no doubt in my mind, we can be good fiscal stewards of the budget. It's going to make some hard choices. I just earlier in this press conference talked about $187 billion over 10 years of mandatory spending reductions. That's going to take some political will by people. But there's a good place to start right there when it comes to offsets—or the 150 programs that can be streamlined or eliminated. There's no doubt in my mind, we can work together to do it. We've got big things to do, and I intend to work with Congress to continue to do them.

Listen, thank you for your time.

NOTE: The President's news conference began at 10:31 a.m. in the Rose Garden at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to senior Al Qaida associate Abu Musab Al Zarqawi; Mayor Gregory Brent Warr of Gulfport, MS; Mayor Matthew J. Avara of Pascagoula, MS; Patrick J. Fitzgerald, U.S. Attorney for the Northern District of Illinois, and Department of Justice CIA leak investigation Special Prosecutor; Gen. John P. Abizaid, USA, commander, U.S. Central Command; author John M. Barry; and Anthony S. Fauci, Director, National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases. A reporter referred to Gen. George W. Casey, Jr., USA, commanding general, Multi-National Force—Iraq; commentators William J. Bennett, William Kristol, and Rush Limbaugh; and former Baltimore Orioles' first baseman Rafael Palmeiro.

Message on the Observance of Ramadan
October 4, 2005

Laura and I send warm greetings to Muslims in the United States and throughout the world as they begin the observance of Ramadan.

The month of Ramadan, which commemorates the revelation of the Qur'an to the prophet Muhammed, is the holiest month of the Muslim year. It is a special time of reflection, fasting, and charity. It is also a time of spiritual growth and prayer and an occasion to remember the less fortunate by sharing God's gifts with those in need.

Throughout our history, America has been blessed by the contributions of people of many different faiths. Our Muslim citizens have helped make our Nation a stronger and more hopeful place through their faith, generosity, and compassion.

May this be a blessed Ramadan for Muslims in the United States and around the world. Ramadan mubarak.

GEORGE W. BUSH

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

Memorandum on the African Burial Ground in New York City
October 4, 2005

Memorandum for the Secretary of the Interior

Subject: African Burial Ground, New York City

The African Burial Ground, located in New York City, is a National Historic Landmark administered by the General Services Administration (GSA). This site includes objects of historic and scientific significance that may be appropriate for Federal protection through designation as a National Monument under the Antiquities Act of 1906 (16 U.S.C. 431).

The GSA's archaeological research has identified over 400 human remains, along with associated artifacts dating back to the 18th century. Further exploration at the discovered site may provide research on the experience of the African population in Colonial New York.

Accordingly, please provide me with an assessment of the historic and scientific significance of the African Burial Ground and whether it may warrant permanent Federal protection through designation as a National Monument.

GEORGE W. BUSH

Message to the Congress Extending the Period of Production of the Naval Petroleum Reserve
October 4, 2005

To the Congress of the United States:

Consistent with section 7422(c)(2) of title 10, United States Code, I am informing you of my decision to extend the period of production of the Naval Petroleum Reserves for a period of 3 years from April

5, 2006, the expiration date of the currently authorized period of production.

Attached is a copy of the report prepared by my Administration investigating the necessity of continued production of the reserves consistent with section 7422(c)(2)(B) of title 10. In light of the findings contained in the report, I certify that continued production from the Naval Petroleum Reserves is in the national interest.

GEORGE W. BUSH

The White House,
October 4, 2005.

Remarks Following a Meeting With Secretary of Defense Donald H. Rumsfeld

October 5, 2005

The President. I just had a briefing from Secretary Rumsfeld and General Pace on our ongoing operations in the western part of Iraq. As you know, we're on the offense against insurgents and terrorists. We fully understand they intend to disrupt the constitutional process, or will try to do so, as well as stop the progress of democracy. And part of the way the Pentagon and the folks on the ground are going to deal with it is to stay on the offense, and that's what's taking place.

I was also pleased to hear there are 3,000 Iraqi forces in the fight, that they're doing a fine job out there, that they're—they make a difference on the battlefield.

We also have General Petraeus with us, who has served incredibly well in Iraq. His job was to help U.S. forces and coalition forces train the Iraqis so they can take the fight to the enemy. He briefed me and will be briefing the country at the Pentagon here a little later on, about the strong progress that we're making, that we've recruited a lot of folks, but we've got more than just recruitment going on. We've got a quality control program in place to make sure that the troops we train are capable of taking the fight to the enemy. Over 30 percent of the Iraqi troops are in the lead on these offensive operations. We've got troops embedded with them, and it's important for the training mission. But, nevertheless, the Iraqis are showing more and more capability to take the fight to the enemy. And that's how we're going to succeed in helping democracy become established in Iraq.

I've told the American people all along, our troops will stay there as long as necessary. We'll do the job. We'll train these folks, and as they become more capable, we will be able to bring folks home with the honor they've earned.

And we're seeing progress on the ground, and we're also seeing political progress on the ground. The constitution has been written. Folks will have a chance to vote it up or down here this month. And then there will be elections, if the constitution is approved, for a permanent government.

So on the one hand, we're making progress when it comes to training Iraqis to take the fight to the enemy. We're bringing the enemy to justice. We're on the offense. On the other hand, democracy is moving forward in a part of the world that is so desperate for democracy and so desperate for freedom.

And so, General, I want to thank you for your service—General Petraeus.

Lt. Gen. Petraeus. Thank you, sir.

The President. Thank you for your service too. But thank you for your service. You've done a fine job.

Lt. Gen. Petraeus. Thank you, sir.

The President. I'm proud of you. Thank you all very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:43 a.m. in the Rose Garden at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Gen. Peter Pace, USMC, Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff; and Lt. Gen. David H. Petraeus, USA, former commander, Multi-National Security Transition Command—Iraq.

Remarks to Reporters Following a Visit With Wounded Troops at Walter Reed Army Medical Center
October 5, 2005

Once again, I had the honor of thanking the docs and nurses that provide such incredible care to our wounded soldiers. Every time I come here, I'm amazed by the courage and decency and strength of those who wear the Nation's uniform. It is such an honor to be the Commander in Chief of such fine men and women.

I ask for God's blessings on them and their families as they recover from their sacrifice and service.

Thank you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:32 p.m. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Remarks to the National Endowment for Democracy
October 6, 2005

Thank you all. Thank you all. Please be seated. Thank you for the warm welcome. I'm honored once again to be with the supporters of the National Endowment for Democracy. Since the day President Ronald Reagan set out the vision for this endowment, the world has seen the swiftest advance of democratic institutions in history. And Americans are proud to have played our role in this great story.

Our Nation stood guard on tense borders. We spoke for the rights of dissidents and the hopes of exiles. We aided the rise of new democracies on the ruins of tyranny. And all the cost and sacrifice of that struggle has been worth it, because from Latin America to Europe to Asia, we've gained the peace that freedom brings.

In this new century, freedom is once again assaulted by enemies determined to rollback generations of democratic progress. Once again, we're responding to a global campaign of fear with a global campaign of freedom. And once again, we will see freedom's victory.

Vin, I want to thank you for inviting me back. And thank you for the short introduction. [*Laughter*] I appreciate Carl Gershman. I want to welcome former Congressman Dick Gephardt, who is a board member of the National Endowment for Democracy. It's good to see you, Dick. And I appreciate Chris Cox, who is the Chairman of the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission and a board member for the National Endowment of Democracy, for being here as well. I want to thank all the other board members.

I appreciate the Secretary of State, Condi Rice, who has joined us—alongside her, Secretary of Defense Don Rumsfeld. Thank you all for being here. I'm proud as well

that the newly sworn-in Chairman of the Joint Chiefs, the first Marine ever to hold that position, is with us today, General Peter Pace. I thank the members of the diplomatic corps who are here as well.

Recently our country observed the fourth anniversary of a great evil and looked back on a great turning point in our history. We still remember a proud city covered in smoke and ashes, a fire across the Potomac, and passengers who spent their final moments on Earth fighting the enemy. We still remember the men who rejoice in every death and Americans in uniform rising to duty. And we remember the calling that came to us on that day and continues to this hour: We will confront this mortal danger to all humanity. We will not tire or rest until the war on terror is won.

The images and experience of September the 11th are unique for Americans. Yet the evil of that morning has reappeared on other days, in other places, in Mombasa and Casablanca and Riyadh and Jakarta and Istanbul and Madrid and Beslan and Taba and Netanya and Baghdad and elsewhere. In the past few months, we've seen a new terror offensive with attacks on London, Sharm el-Sheikh, and a deadly bombing in Bali once again. All these separate images of destruction and suffering that we see on the news can seem like random and isolated acts of madness. Innocent men and women and children have died simply because they boarded the wrong train or worked in the wrong building or checked into the wrong hotel. Yet while the killers choose their victims indiscriminately, their attacks serve a clear and focused ideology, a set of beliefs and goals that are evil but not insane.

Some call this evil Islamic radicalism; others, militant jihadism; still others, Islamo-fascism. Whatever it's called, this ideology is very different from the religion of Islam. This form of radicalism exploits Islam to serve a violent, political vision: the establishment, by terrorism and subversion and insurgency, of a totalitarian empire that denies all political and religious freedom. These extremists distort the idea of jihad into a call for terrorist murder against Christians and Jews and Hindus and also against Muslims from other traditions, who they regard as heretics.

Many militants are part of global, borderless terrorist organizations like Al Qaida, which spreads propaganda and provides financing and technical assistance to local extremists and conducts dramatic and brutal operations like September the 11th. Other militants are found in regional groups, often associated with Al Qaida, paramilitary insurgencies and separatist movements in places like Somalia and the Philippines and Pakistan and Chechnya and Kashmir and Algeria. Still others spring up in local cells, inspired by Islamic radicalism but not centrally directed. Islamic radicalism is more like a loose network with many branches than an army under a single command. Yet these operatives, fighting on scattered battlefields, share a similar ideology and vision for our world.

We know the vision of the radicals because they've openly stated it in videos and audiotapes and letters and declarations and web sites. First, these extremists want to end American and Western influence in the broader Middle East, because we stand for democracy and peace and stand in the way of their ambitions. Al Qaida's leader, Usama bin Laden, has called on Muslims to dedicate, quote, their "resources, sons, and money to driving the infidels out of their lands." Their tactic to meet this goal has been consistent for a quarter-century: They hit us and expect us to run. They want us to repeat the sad history of Beirut in 1983 and Mogadishu in 1993, only this time on a larger scale, with greater consequences.

Second, the militant network wants to use the vacuum created by an American retreat to gain control of a country, a base from which to launch attacks and conduct their war against nonradical Muslim governments. Over the past few decades, radicals

have specifically targeted Egypt and Saudi Arabia and Pakistan and Jordan for potential takeover. They achieved their goal, for a time, in Afghanistan. Now they've set their sights on Iraq. Bin Laden has stated: "The whole world is watching this war and the two adversaries. It's either victory and glory or misery and humiliation." The terrorists regard Iraq as the central front in their war against humanity, and we must recognize Iraq as the central front in our war on terror.

Third, the militants believe that controlling one country will rally the Muslim masses, enabling them to overthrow all moderate governments in the region and establish a radical Islamic empire that spans from Spain to Indonesia. With greater economic and military and political power, the terrorists would be able to advance their stated agenda, to develop weapons of mass destruction, to destroy Israel, to intimidate Europe, to assault the American people, and to blackmail our Government into isolation.

Some might be tempted to dismiss these goals as fanatical or extreme. Well, they are fanatical and extreme, and they should not be dismissed. Our enemy is utterly committed. As Zarqawi has vowed: "We will either achieve victory over the human race or we will pass to the eternal life." And the civilized world knows very well that other fanatics in history, from Hitler to Stalin to Pol Pot, consumed whole nations in war and genocide before leaving the stage of history. Evil men, obsessed with ambition and unburdened by conscience, must be taken very seriously, and we must stop them before their crimes can multiply.

Defeating the militant network is difficult, because it thrives like a parasite on the suffering and frustration of others. The radicals exploit local conflicts to build a culture of victimization in which someone else is always to blame and violence is always the solution. They exploit resentful and disillusioned young men and women, recruiting them through radical mosques as the pawns of terror. And they exploit modern technology to multiply their destructive power. Instead of attending faraway training camps, recruits can now access online training libraries to learn how to build a roadside bomb or fire a rocket-propelled grenade, and this further spreads the threat of violence, even within peaceful democratic societies.

The influence of Islamic radicalism is also magnified by helpers and enablers. They have been sheltered by authoritarian regimes, allies of convenience like Syria and Iran, that share the goal of hurting America and moderate Muslim governments and use terrorist propaganda to blame their own failures on the West and America and on the Jews. The radicals depend on front operations, such as corrupted charities, which direct money to terrorist activity. They're strengthened by those who aggressively fund the spread of radical, intolerant versions of Islam in unstable parts of the world. The militants are aided as well by elements of the Arab news media that incite hatred and anti-Semitism, that feed conspiracy theories and speak of a so-called American "war on Islam," with seldom a word about American action to protect Muslims in Afghanistan and Bosnia, Somalia, Kosovo, Kuwait, and Iraq.

Some have also argued that extremism has been strengthened by the actions of our coalition in Iraq, claiming that our presence in that country has somehow caused or triggered the rage of radicals. I would remind them that we were not in Iraq on September the 11th, 2001, and Al Qaida attacked us anyway. The hatred of the radicals existed before Iraq was an issue, and it will exist after Iraq is no longer an excuse. The Government of Russia did not support Operation Iraqi Freedom, and yet militants killed more than 180 Russian schoolchildren in Beslan.

Over the years, these extremists have used a litany of excuses for violence, the Israeli presence on the West Bank or the

U.S. military presence in Saudi Arabia or the defeat of the Taliban or the Crusades of a thousand years ago. In fact, we're not facing a set of grievances that can be soothed and addressed. We're facing a radical ideology with inalterable objectives, to enslave whole nations and intimidate the world. No act of ours invited the rage of the killers, and no concession, bribe, or act of appeasement would change or limit their plans for murder. On the contrary, they target nations whose behavior they believe they can change through violence. Against such an enemy, there is only one effective response: We will never back down, never give in, and never accept anything less than complete victory.

The murderous ideology of the Islamic radicals is the great challenge of our new century. Yet, in many ways, this fight resembles the struggle against communism in the last century. Like the ideology of communism, Islamic radicalism is elitist, led by a self-appointed vanguard that presumes to speak for the Muslim masses. Bin Laden says his own role is to tell Muslims, quote, "what is good for them and what is not." And what this man who grew up in wealth and privilege considers good for poor Muslims is that they become killers and suicide bombers. He assures them that his—that this is the road to paradise, though he never offers to go along for the ride.

Like the ideology of communism, our new enemy teaches that innocent individuals can be sacrificed to serve a political vision. And this explains their coldblooded contempt for human life. We've seen it in the murders of Daniel Pearl, Nicholas Berg, and Margaret Hassan, and many others. In a courtroom in the Netherlands, the killer of Theo van Gogh turned to the victim's grieving mother and said, "I do not feel your pain, because I believe you are an infidel." And in spite of this veneer of religious rhetoric, most of the victims claimed by the militants are fellow Muslims.

When 25 Iraqi children are killed in a bombing or Iraqi teachers are executed at their school or hospital workers are killed caring for the wounded, this is murder, pure and simple, the total rejection of justice and honor and morality and religion. These militants are not just the enemies of America or the enemies of Iraq; they are the enemies of Islam and the enemies of humanity. We have seen this kind of shameless cruelty before, in the heartless zealotry that led to the gulags and the Cultural Revolution and the Killing Fields.

Like the ideology of communism, our new enemy pursues totalitarian aims. Its leaders pretend to be an aggrieved party, representing the powerless against imperial enemies. In truth they have endless ambitions of imperial domination, and they wish to make everyone powerless except themselves. Under their rule, they have banned books and desecrated historical monuments and brutalized women. They seek to end dissent in every form and to control every aspect of life and to rule the soul itself. While promising a future of justice and holiness, the terrorists are preparing for a future of oppression and misery.

Like the ideology of communism, our new enemy is dismissive of free peoples, claiming that men and women who live in liberty are weak and decadent. Zarqawi has said that Americans are, quote, "the most cowardly of God's creatures." But let's be clear: It is cowardice that seeks to kill children and the elderly with car bombs and cuts the throat of a bound captive and targets worshipers leaving a mosque. It is courage that liberated more than 50 million people. It is courage that keeps an untiring vigil against the enemies of a rising democracy. And it is courage in the cause of freedom that once again will destroy the enemies of freedom.

And Islamic radicalism, like the ideology of communism, contains inherent contradictions that doom it to failure. By fearing freedom—by distrusting human creativity

and punishing change and limiting the contributions of half the population, this ideology undermines the very qualities that make human progress possible and human societies successful. The only thing modern about the militants' vision is the weapons they want to use against us. The rest of their grim vision is defined by a warped image of the past, a declaration of war on the idea of progress itself. And whatever lies ahead in the war against this ideology, the outcome is not in doubt: Those who despise freedom and progress have condemned themselves to isolation, decline, and collapse. Because free peoples believe in the future, free peoples will own the future.

We didn't ask for this global struggle, but we're answering history's call with confidence and a comprehensive strategy. Defeating a broad and adaptive network requires patience, constant pressure, and strong partners in Europe, the Middle East, North Africa, Asia, and beyond. Working with these partners, we're disrupting militant conspiracies, destroying their ability to make war, and working to give millions in a troubled region of the world a hopeful alternative to resentment and violence.

First, we're determined to prevent the attacks of terrorist networks before they occur. We're reorganizing our Government to give this Nation a broad and coordinated homeland defense. We're reforming our intelligence agencies for the incredibly difficult task of tracking enemy activity, based on information that often comes in small fragments from widely scattered sources, here and abroad. We're acting, along with the governments from many countries, to destroy the terrorist networks and incapacitate their leaders. Together we've killed or captured nearly all of those directly responsible for the September the 11th attacks, as well as some of bin Laden's most senior deputies, Al Qaida managers and operatives in more than 24 countries: the mastermind of the USS *Cole* bombing, who was chief of Al Qaida operations in the Persian Gulf; the mastermind of the Jakarta and the first Bali bombings; a senior Zarqawi terrorist planner, who was planning attacks in Turkey; and many of Al Qaida's senior leaders in Saudi Arabia.

Overall, the United States and our partners have disrupted at least 10 serious Al Qaida terrorist plots since September the 11th, including 3 Al Qaida plots to attack inside the United States. We've stopped at least five more Al Qaida efforts to case targets in the United States or infiltrate operatives into our country. Because of this steady progress, the enemy is wounded, but the enemy is still capable of global operations. Our commitment is clear: We will not relent until the organized international terror networks are exposed and broken, and their leaders held to account for their acts of murder.

Second, we're determined to deny weapons of mass destruction to outlaw regimes, and to their terrorist allies who would use them without hesitation. The United States, working with Great Britain, Pakistan, and other nations, has exposed and disrupted a major black-market operation in nuclear technology led by A.Q. Khan. Libya has abandoned its chemical and nuclear weapons programs as well as long-range ballistic missiles. And in the last year, America and our partners in the Proliferation Security Initiative have stopped more than a dozen shipments of suspected weapons technology, including equipment for Iran's ballistic missile program.

This progress has reduced the danger to free nations but has not removed it. Evil men who want to use horrendous weapons against us are working in deadly earnest to gain them. And we're working urgently to keep weapons of mass destruction out of their hands.

Third, we're determined to deny radical groups the support and sanctuary of outlaw regimes. State sponsors like Syria and Iran have a long history of collaboration with terrorists, and they deserve no patience from the victims of terror. The United

States makes no distinction between those who commit acts of terror and those who support and harbor them, because they're equally as guilty of murder. Any government that chooses to be an ally of terror has also chosen to be an enemy of civilization. And the civilized world must hold those regimes to account.

Fourth, we're determined to deny the militants control of any nation, which they would use as a home base and a launching pad for terror. For this reason, we're fighting beside our Afghan partners against remnants of the Taliban and their Al Qaida allies. For this reason, we're working with President Musharraf to oppose and isolate the militants in Pakistan. And for this reason, we're fighting the regime remnants and terrorists in Iraq. The terrorist goal is to overthrow a rising democracy, claim a strategic country as a haven for terror, destabilize the Middle East, and strike America and other free nations with ever-increasing violence. Our goal is to defeat the terrorists and their allies at the heart of their power, and so we will defeat the enemy in Iraq.

Our coalition, along with our Iraqi allies, is moving forward with a comprehensive, specific military plan. Area by area, city by city, we're conducting offensive operations to clear out enemy forces and leaving behind Iraqi units to prevent the enemy from returning. Within these areas, we're working for tangible improvements in the lives of Iraqi citizens. And we're aiding the rise of an elected government that unites the Iraqi people against extremism and violence. This work involves great risk for Iraqis and for Americans and coalition forces. Wars are not won without sacrifice, and this war will require more sacrifice, more time, and more resolve.

The terrorists are as brutal an enemy as we've ever faced. They're unconstrained by any notion of our common humanity or by the rules of warfare. No one should underestimate the difficulties ahead, nor should they overlook the advantages we bring to this fight.

Some observers look at the job ahead and adopt a self-defeating pessimism. It is not justified. With every random bombing and with every funeral of a child, it becomes more clear that the extremists are not patriots or resistance fighters. They are murderers at war with the Iraqi people themselves.

In contrast, the elected leaders of Iraq are proving to be strong and steadfast. By any standard or precedent of history, Iraq has made incredible political progress, from tyranny to liberation to national elections to the writing of a constitution, in the space of 2½ years. With our help, the Iraqi military is gaining new capabilities and new confidence with every passing month. At the time of our Fallujah operations 11 months ago, there were only a few Iraqi army battalions in combat. Today, there are more than 80 Iraqi army battalions fighting the insurgency alongside our forces. Progress isn't easy, but it is steady. And no fair-minded person should ignore, deny, or dismiss the achievements of the Iraqi people.

Some observers question the durability of democracy in Iraq. They underestimate the power and appeal of freedom. We've heard it suggested that Iraq's democracy must be on shaky ground because Iraqis are arguing with each other. But that's the essence of democracy, making your case, debating with those who you disagree—who disagree, building consensus by persuasion, and answering to the will of the people. We've heard it said that the Shi'a, Sunnis, and Kurds of Iraq are too divided to form a lasting democracy. In fact, democratic federalism is the best hope for unifying a diverse population, because a Federal constitutional system respects the rights and religious traditions of all citizens while giving all minorities, including the Sunnis, a stake and a voice in the future of their country. It is true that the seeds of freedom have only recently been planted in Iraq,

but democracy, when it grows, is not a fragile flower; it is a healthy, sturdy tree.

As Americans, we believe that people everywhere—everywhere—prefer freedom to slavery and that liberty, once chosen, improves the lives of all. And so we're confident, as our coalition and the Iraqi people each do their part, Iraqi democracy will succeed.

Some observers also claim that America would be better off by cutting our losses and leaving Iraq now. This is a dangerous illusion, refuted with a simple question: Would the United States and other free nations be more safe or less safe with Zarqawi and bin Laden in control of Iraq, its people, and its resources? Having removed a dictator who hated free peoples, we will not stand by as a new set of killers, dedicated to the destruction of our own country, seizes control of Iraq by violence.

There's always a temptation, in the middle of a long struggle, to seek the quiet life, to escape the duties and problems of the world, and to hope the enemy grows weary of fanaticism and tired of murder. This would be a pleasant world, but it's not the world we live in. The enemy is never tired, never sated, never content with yesterday's brutality. This enemy considers every retreat of the civilized world as an invitation to greater violence. In Iraq, there is no peace without victory. We will keep our nerve, and we will win that victory.

The fifth element of our strategy in the war on terror is to deny the militants future recruits by replacing hatred and resentment with democracy and hope across the broader Middle East. This is a difficult, long-term project, yet there's no alternative to it. Our future and the future of that region are linked. If the broader Middle East is left to grow in bitterness, if countries remain in misery, while radicals stir the resentments of millions, then that part of the world will be a source of endless conflict and mounting danger for our generation and the next. If the peoples of that region are permitted to choose their own destiny and advance by their own energy and by their participation as free men and women, then the extremists will be marginalized, and the flow of violent radicalism to the rest of the world will slow and eventually end. By standing for the hope and freedom of others, we make our own freedom more secure.

America is making this stand in practical ways. We're encouraging our friends in the Middle East, including Egypt and Saudi Arabia, to take the path of reform, to strengthen their own societies in the fight against terror by respecting the rights and choices of their own people. We're standing with dissidents and exiles against oppressive regimes, because we know that the dissidents of today will be the democratic leaders of tomorrow. We're making our case through public diplomacy, stating clearly and confidently our belief in self-determination and the rule of law and religious freedom and equal rights for women, beliefs that are right and true in every land and in every culture.

As we do our part to confront radicalism, we know that the most vital work will be done within the Islamic world itself. And this work has begun. Many Muslim scholars have already publicly condemned terrorism, often citing Chapter 5, Verse 32 of the Koran, which states that killing an innocent human being is like killing all humanity and saving the life of one person is like saving all of humanity. After the attacks in London on July the 7th, an imam in the United Arab Emirates declared, "Whoever does such a thing is not a Muslim nor a religious person." The time has come for all responsible Islamic leaders to join in denouncing an ideology that exploits Islam for political ends and defiles a noble faith.

Many people of the Muslim faith are proving their commitment at great personal risk. Everywhere we have engaged the fight against extremism, Muslim allies have stood up and joined the fight, becoming partners

in a vital cause. Afghan troops are in combat against Taliban remnants. Iraqi soldiers are sacrificing to defeat Al Qaida in their own country. These brave citizens know the stakes, the survival of their own liberty, the future of their own region, the justice and humanity of their own tradition, and the United States of America is proud to stand beside them.

With the rise of a deadly enemy and the unfolding of a global ideological struggle, our time in history will be remembered for new challenges and unprecedented dangers. And yet the fight we have joined is also the current expression of an ancient struggle, between those who put their faith in dictators and those who put their faith in the people. Throughout history, tyrants and would-be tyrants have always claimed that murder is justified to serve their grand vision, and they end up alienating decent people across the globe. Tyrants and would-be tyrants have always claimed that regimented societies are strong and pure, until those societies collapse in corruption and decay. Tyrants and would-be tyrants have always claimed that free men and women are weak and decadent, until the day that free men and women defeat them.

We don't know the course of our own struggle—the course our own struggle will take or the sacrifices that might lie ahead. We do know, however, that the defense of freedom is worth our sacrifice. We do know the love of freedom is the mightiest force of history. And we do know the cause of freedom will once again prevail.

May God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:07 a.m. at the Ronald Reagan Building and International Trade Center. In his remarks, he referred to Vin Weber, chairman, and Carl Gershman, president, National Endowment for Democracy; senior Al Qaida associate Abu Musab Al Zarqawi; Usama bin Laden, leader of the Al Qaida terrorist organization; Mohammed Bouyeri, who was convicted of the November 2, 2004, murder of film director Theo van Gogh; Anneke van Gogh, mother of Theo van Gogh; Abd al-Rahim al-Nashiri, Al Qaida's chief of operations for the Persian Gulf; Nurjaman Riduan Isamuddin (also known as Hambali), Al Qaida's chief operational planner in Southeast Asia, who was captured in Thailand on August 11, 2003; Abu Azzam, Al Qaida operative in Iraq; A.Q. Khan, former head of Pakistan's nuclear program; President Pervez Musharraf of Pakistan; and former President Saddam Hussein of Iraq.

Remarks in a Tribute to National Review Magazine and William F. Buckley, Jr.

October 6, 2005

Thanks. I'm here to escort William F. Buckley, Jr., to lunch. [*Laughter*] But first I've got some things I want to say. It's a honor to celebrate the 50th anniversary of National Review and soon to be the 80th birthday of our honoree. You probably think this is a—the Yale Scholars Association meeting. [*Laughter*] Actually, Bill Buckley did have an influence on me when I followed him at Yale. You might remember one of his famous quotes was that, "The job of conservatives was to stand athwart history, yelling, 'Stop.' "

That's the approach I took to most of my classes. [*Laughter*]

I also do want to throw a little bouquet to him and let him know that all I've learned about the English language—[*laughter*]—at any rate, it's good to welcome the Buckley family. Thank you all

for coming. It's such an honor to have you all here. You've got a great family, and you're a family of public service and a family that has stood strong for what you believe, without wavering. I appreciate Dr. Kissinger and Dusty Rhodes and Ed Capano as well. It's good to see you all.

The interesting thing about Bill Buckley's career is he's a—obviously, not idle. He likes to do a lot of different things. He was an author, an editor, a spy, a novelist, a sailor, and a conductor. The most important thing he did was to contribute to the realm of ideas for America. He was an entrepreneur. He kind of gathered up some dreamers and decided to do something. A lot of times dreamers don't do anything; they just sit there and dream. He decided to do something, and he formed a magazine that helped move conservatism from the margins of American society into the Oval Office. That's a significant contribution.

The amazing thing is, is that sometimes it's hard to be a leader because you hear all kinds of voices. He's certainly heard different voices when he formed the National Review. He had an eclectic group of people. That's a Yale word. [*Laughter*] He had voices that included ex-communists who knew better than most the threat posed to America by the Soviet Union. He had voices such as free marketers who knew that markets could deliver better results than bureaucracies. He had voices from the traditionalists who understood that a Government by—of and by and for the people could not stand unless it stood on moral ground. They all different—represented a different strand of conservative thought. Yet, when they came together under the conductor's baton, they made beautiful music. Congratulations for being a leader.

I'm sure it's hard for some of the youngsters—unfortunately, that doesn't include me anymore—[*laughter*]—to imagine the day when the only conservative game in Washington, DC, was Bill Buckley and the National Review. And today, we've got, of course, an abundance of conservative columnists and radio hosts and television shows and think tanks and all kinds of organizations. I guess in an intellectual sense, you could say these are all Bill's children. And like children, they grow up and go their own way. But I'm confident that the faithful advocates of the free enterprise system, like those at the National Review, regard the competition they have created as a good thing. I certainly hope so.

It's hard to believe that in 1955, the Soviet Union was in full power, that Ronald Reagan was a Democrat, and the truth of the matter is, Bill, I was more interested in Willie Mays than I was in you. [*Laughter*] But a lot has changed in a brief period of time, when you think about it. Many of the more important changes of the 20th century happened because the National Review stood strong, and that's a fact—that's a fact of history.

I'm glad to know that the people of National Review aren't resting on their laurels. A sign of a good leader is somebody who can lay the foundation so that people are able to carry on. I think that's going to be a legacy of Bill Buckley. He just didn't show up and create something that cratered; he created something that stood the test of time and grew.

The people of the National Review are determined to leave their mark on this new century, and we appreciate it. You got a lot of readers here in the West Wing. My admonition is to keep thinking, to keep writing, and keep working.

I found another Buckley quote interesting—when he wrote, with characteristic modesty, that did National Review not exist, no one would have invented it. [*Laughter*] I think it's more accurate to say that only Bill Buckley could have invented National Review. And that's a tremendous influence on American life that can be explained only by its unwavering trust and appeal of human freedom—this great understanding of the power of freedom to change societies and to lift up people's lives.

It is an honor to be here to thank you for your service. I want to thank you for leaving us a magazine and a group of thinkers that will help make the advance of liberty over the last 50 years look like a dress rehearsal for the next 50 years.

May God bless the Buckley family. Thank you for coming.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:40 a.m. in Room 450 of the Eisenhower Executive Office Building. In his remarks, he referred to former Secretary of State Henry A. Kissinger; and Thomas L. "Dusty" Rhodes, president, board chairman, and chief executive officer, and Edward A. Capano, publisher and chief executive officer, National Review.

Remarks Following Discussions With Prime Minister Ferenc Gyurcsany of Hungary and an Exchange With Reporters
October 7, 2005

President Bush. We'll have opening statements, and we'll both take questions—two a side.

Mr. Prime Minister, welcome. I thank you for coming. We have just had a very lengthy discussion, and it should be a lengthy discussion. After all, we're friends and allies. I appreciate very much your understanding of the importance of democracy and freedom. I want to thank you for your leadership.

I am pleased with the economic progress that you've made. I say "pleased" because there is a lot of U.S. investment in Hungary. People have chosen to invest in Hungary because it's a place that honors rule of law. It's got reasonable taxation and reasonable regulation. I'm not surprised that the country has got a good economic environment. After all, the Prime Minister is somebody who understands economics and business. And so congratulations on setting an environment that people—in which people feel comfortable about investing.

We talked about the world. And again, I want to thank Hungary for its contributions in Afghanistan and Iraq.

The Prime Minister also brought up some issues of concern to the people of Hungary, one of which, of course, is visa policy. He understands that his job, when talking to the President, is to—is to say, "The people of my country"—which he did—"are concerned about the visa policy." And I told him that we recognize that we need to move forward and work with our friend. We have set up a roadmap, a way forward, to make sure our visa policy works for the people of Hungary.

Mr. Prime Minister, thank you for bringing up the issue. I assured him that I will continue to work with Secretary Rice to put a plan in place, to cooperate with Hungary, and to have a plan in place that is a fair and reasonable plan for the people of Hungary.

All in all, I found it to be a great visit. The visit, by the way, started yesterday when his good wife and my wife visit—had a—had a strong visit. She laid the groundwork for this diplomacy that's being conducted today, and she did a great job. So welcome to you and your wife, here to America.

Prime Minister Gyurcsany. Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen, let me use my mother tongue, mainly because I would like all the Hungarian people understand what I'm saying here in the Oval Office. Please understand, just—Hungarian sometimes is very hard.

[*At this point, the Prime Minister continued his remarks in Hungarian, and they were translated by an interpreter.*]

So we came to the United States to strengthen our friendship and our ally. We came to emphasize once again that we understand that we have joint matters, joint affairs in this world to do. And maybe the two countries have different possibilities, but we have equal responsibility to sustain stability and peace in the world and to represent the case of democracy.

Now in these matters, the United States and Hungary are not just allies but are also good, understanding friends. We did reinforce our former agreement about our presence in Iraq and Afghanistan. We did not introduce any new elements to that field.

I think we also would like to see that besides security elements, the cooperation, the partnership between the United States and Hungary are more and more about business and good relations. And also, American investors, the largest American businesses, have played a key role in making sure that Hungary has reached a record high in terms of—[*inaudible*]—capital influx over the past year.

Many similarities and some differences between our two countries, but there is one thing where we are completely identical in our ideas. Both President Bush and myself want to make sure that our people in the—in the United States and in Hungary live in security, that they have peaceful lives, prosperity, democracy. And these are the key issues, really.

Many thanks, Mr. President.

President Bush. Thank you. Thanks for coming. A couple of questions.

Jennifer [Jennifer Loven, Associated Press].

Associate Justice-Designate Harriet E. Miers

Q. Thank you, sir. The criticism, from some conservatives, of Harriet Miers is continuing and getting rather sharp, as you know. Are you willing to rule out ever letting her nomination be withdrawn?

President Bush. Harriet Miers is an extraordinary nominee. She is a very bright woman. She is a pioneer in the law in Texas. In other words, she was the first woman hire of her firm, first partner of the firm. She's the first head of the Texas Bar Association. I mean, she has got a record of accomplishment that is extraordinary, in my judgment. She is a woman of deep character and strength. She is—she didn't come from the bench, but so did—you know, a lot of other people didn't come from the bench when they were named for the Supreme Court. I would ask people to look at Byron White, for example, or Judge Rehnquist himself.

And I'm confident she's going to be a Supreme Court judge who will not legislate from the bench and will strictly interpret the Constitution. I am incredibly proud of my friend being willing to take on this task. She's going to be a great judge.

Q. So are you ruling it out, any withdrawal?

President Bush. No, she is going to be on the bench. She'll be confirmed. And when she's on the bench, people will see a fantastic woman who is honest, open, humble, and capable of being a great Supreme Court judge.

Visa Issue

Q. Have you set a deadline for the visa issue to be solved?

Prime Minister Gyurcsany. We agreed on a roadmap which makes sure that Hungarian people can really perceive that it's easier and more equitable to have access to American visas. I could feel that Mr. President has a very clear understanding about why this is important for Hungarians. And I was completely sure that we will achieve the fastest possible progress which is allowed by legislative background and laws here in the United States.

President Bush. Good answer. Steve [Steve Holland, Reuters].

Terrorist Threat Against New York City Subway System

Q. How significant was the threat against New York yesterday, and did New York overreact?

President Bush. I'm getting a little older, Steve, I can't hear you. [*Laughter*]

Q. Sorry. Did New York City overreact to the threat yesterday? And how significant was that threat, and are there any suspects?

President Bush. Well, our job is to gather intelligence and pass them on to local authorities. And they make the judgments necessary to respond. The level of cooperation between the Federal Government and the local government is getting better and better. And part of that level of cooperation is the ability to pass information on. And we did, and they responded.

Q. So you don't think they overreacted?

President Bush. I think they took the information that we gave and made the judgments they thought were necessary. And the American people have got to know that, one, that we're collecting information and sharing it with local authorities on a timely basis, and that's important.

50th Anniversary of the 1956 Hungarian Revolution

Q. I would like to raise the question to President Bush as well, if, as far as you know, you've got an invitation from the Hungarian Government for next year for the 50th anniversary of the 1956 revolution? So would you accept this invitation?

Prime Minister Gyurcsany. We certainly spoke about the invitation; 1956 is a huge achievement for the Hungarian nation. And the impact of that goes far beyond the borders of Hungary. We certainly want to make sure that our friends, friends of democracy are there next year in Hungary. Therefore, I extended an invitation to the President for next year to Hungary, and I'm completely certain that he would come. [*Laughter*]

President Bush. Well, he did extend the invitation, and I appreciate the invitation, because 1956 means a lot to a lot of Americans. A lot of Americans came from Hungary to live here after the '56 incidents. They can trace their history to our country because of those—of what took place in Hungary. Plus, a lot of Americans followed the incidents in 1956 and appreciated and respected the courage of folks who were willing to stand up for freedom and liberty.

See, 1956 says to us, there are key moments in history when ordinary citizens are willing to defend the right for all to be free. And so it's an important event. I told the Prime Minister, I'm not my own scheduler. I will pass the word on how important this event is, and I will look very carefully at the invitation.

Listen, thank you all. Mr. Prime Minister, thanks for coming. Appreciate it.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:50 a.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. In his remarks, the President referred to Klara Dobrev, wife of Prime Minister Gyurcsany. Prime Minister Gyurcsany spoke partly in Hungarian, and those portions of his remarks were translated by an interpreter.

Remarks at a Reception Celebrating Hispanic Heritage Month
October 7, 2005

The President. Gracias, y bienvenidos a la Casa Blanca. Thank you for coming. It is such an honor to have you here to help celebrate Hispanic Heritage Month. It's a month in which we can recognize the contributions that Hispanic Americans make to our great land.

The Hispanic community is known for its strong commitment to the *familia y fe* and a great love of our country. Here's what I think: I think Hispanic Americans—I don't think, I know Hispanic Americans have helped build our country and shape our culture, and the United States is better off because of the Hispanic influence.

I appreciate so very much that members of my administration have come. I told them they could take a little time off from work. [*Laughter*] Carlos Gutierrez, the Secretary of Commerce, and his wife, Edi, thank you for coming. *El juez*, the Attorney General of the United States, Al Gonzales, and his wife, Becky. Hector Barreto, head of the SBA. Newly confirmed as the Assistant Secretary of Commerce, Israel Hernandez. Congratulations.

We've got Members of the Congress who are here. Wayne Allard, thank you for coming. Ileana Ros-Lehtinen, Marilyn Musgrave, Henry Cuellar, Luis Fortuno, thank you all for being here. It's such an honor you're here. Hans Hertell, an Ambassador to the Dominican Republic, members of the diplomatic corps, thank you all for coming. It's nice of you to join us today. *Los Embajadores.*

It is good to see my friend, Emilio Estefan. Thank you for coming, Emilio. Hector Gomez, Major League Soccer player from the L.A. Galaxy is with us. Christian Gomez, Major League Soccer player from D.C. United. Strong right-hander from the Washington Nats, Esteban Loaiza. *Gracias*, thank you all for coming. We're proud you're here. I appreciate members of the Latino organizations who are here today. Thank you for working on behalf of Latino citizens around the country.

As we celebrate Hispanic Heritage Month, we honor the promise of freedom and opportunity that brought either you or your ancestors to America. That's what we're honoring. We're honoring the fact that this is a free society, and we recognize our responsibility to ensure that everyone in this country has a chance to realize their God-given talents and to realize their dreams. That's what America is all about. America must always be a land of dreamers, and people will have a chance to realize those dreams.

The 21st century opportunity begins with a quality education. You can't be a land of dreams if you don't educate your kids. One of my biggest concerns was that sometimes in our public schools, if your parents didn't speak English, for example, you just got shuffled through. And that was unacceptable to me and unacceptable to many Members of the United States Congress.

I came together for the—with the Congress to challenge what I've called the soft bigotry of low expectations, to encourage school systems all around America to raise standards and raise the bar and measure to make sure that every child is learning to read and write and add and subtract. And if not, if they find they're not learning to read and write and add and subtract, do something about it early, before it's too late.

And so the No Child Left Behind Act became the law. And that law is beginning to make an enormous difference in the lives of Latino youngsters. And I can tell you how I know: It's because we measure. We know. People are learning to read and write and add and subtract, and that's going to make America a better place for generations to come.

Secondly, we've got to make sure that this is a country where work is respected and work is rewarded, where people who want to work hard to own their own business are able to do so. I believe it's important to keep taxes low in order to make sure entrepreneurs are able to get their business started and keep their businesses running.

I know it's important to have legal reform and regulatory reform to make sure the environment is such that entrepreneurs of all walks of life have a chance to flourish. I am proud to report to you that Latino-owned businesses are on the rise in the

United States of America. And America is better for it when people are able to create jobs and own their own business.

I mentioned Hector Barreto being here. The Small Business Administration has more than doubled the number of loans to Hispanic-owned businesses since 2001. Our goal is to get people a chance to realize their dream of owning their own business. And one of the reasons why we're creating jobs in America, that Carlos talked about, is because the small-business sector is strong. Any strong economy must have a strong business sector. And the strong—the business sector is going to be even stronger because of Latino-owned businesses.

I set a goal of 5.5 million new minority homeowners by the end of this decade. I'm proud to report the number of minority homeowners has increased by 2.2 million since I set the goal. See, I love the fact that more and more people from all walks of life are opening up the door of their home and saying, "Welcome to my home. Welcome to my piece of property. Welcome to a place where I can raise my family." There's nothing better than homeownership in America, and this administration is dedicated to make sure more and more people from all walks of life are able to open up the door where they live and say, "Come on in to my house."

As we celebrate Hispanic Heritage Month, we're also going to honor the strong tradition of service in the Hispanic community. Hispanic Americans have fought in every war since our founding. Forty-two Hispanic Americans have earned our Nation's highest military decoration, the Medal of Honor.

At this hour, men and women of Hispanic heritage are bringing freedom to people of other lands. They are laying the foundation of peace for generations to come. They are making sacrifices to bring justice to the terrorists and, at the same time, giving people a chance to live in a free society.

More than 127,000 Hispanic Americans wear the uniform of the United States of America. I'm proud to be their Commander in Chief, and I want to welcome those who wear the uniform to this event today. Thank you all for coming.

The strength of this country is the fact that every day, thousands of citizens, millions of citizens, volunteer to make somebody's life better. And that includes thousands and millions of Hispanic Americans who are volunteering in their community, people who use their time and their talent to make a difference in the lives of others, people who have heard the universal call to love a neighbor just like you'd like to be loved yourself.

In the wake of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita, Hispanic groups around this country provided critical services and much-needed love to people whose lives were affected by those storms. In Texas, the League of United Latin American Citizens—we call them LULAC—served food at shelters and teamed up with the Hispanic Chamber of Commerce to help people find housing as well. In Arizona, Latino groups sent truckloads of water and food and medical supplies to Mississippi. The National Council of La Raza established a relief fund to provide emergency financial aid and housing assistance to hurricane victims. Acts of generosity from Hispanic Americans gave many people a lot of hope, and our Nation honors the compassion of Latinos today in this celebration.

The President's Volunteer Service Award that I'm about to give to six citizens is the highest level of commendation a President can give in recognition of those who have contributed their time and energy to helping others.

Today I'm going to talk about—you'll hear the stories of six folks who have served as such a wonderful example. I mean, not only have these people helped somebody but they served as an example for others. They're true leaders in their own quiet way and their own humble way: Junior Salazar

of Bradenton, Florida; Marie Arcos of Houston, Texas; Manuel Fonseca of Nashville, Tennessee; Elmer Carreno of Silver Spring, Maryland; Maria Hines of Albuquerque, New Mexico; and John Diaz of Crowley, Colorado.

Their efforts are helping children to learn to read, improving fire safety in schools and communities, and helping more Hispanics achieve the dream of a college education. In the wake of the hurricanes, they've helped set up emergency clinics, provided spiritual counseling to the displaced, just simple acts, such as reading stories to children whose families had lost their homes. Today we're here to honor your service, and we appreciate so very much what you have done to help lift the spirit of the country.

As we celebrate Hispanic Heritage Month, we thank the Hispanic community that has helped build and shape our country in so many ways. America is a better place because of your contributions. I join all Americans in celebrating the accomplishments and wishing our Hispanic communities all across the country continued success.

I want to thank you all for coming. And now, I'm going to ask the military aide to please announce the Volunteer Service Awards. *Y por fin, que Dios les bendiga.*

[*At this point, Maj. Christian G. Cabaniss, USMC, Marine Corps Military Aide to the President, read the citations, and the President presented the medals.*]

The President. I hope you can tell why I was so looking forward to this event. There's nothing like being able to thank six quiet heroes, helping to improve somebody's life, and at the same time, improving the spirit of the country. What a joyous occasion. Thank you all for coming. May God bless you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:46 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Emilio Estefan, Jr., president, Estefan Enterprises, and member, President's Committee on the Arts and the Humanities; Herculez Gomez, forward, L.A. Galaxy; and Eleuterio Salazar, Jr., President's Volunteer Service Award recipient. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of these remarks. The National Hispanic Heritage Month proclamation of September 16 is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

Statement on House of Representatives Passage of Legislation To Increase Domestic Refining Capacity

October 7, 2005

I commend the House for passing legislation that would increase our refining capacity and help address the cost of gasoline, diesel fuels, and jet fuels. No refineries have been built in our Nation since 1976, and the recent disruptions in supply from Hurricanes Katrina and Rita have demonstrated that additional refining capacity is critically needed. We must continue to promote sound energy policy to help keep prices down for small businesses and hard-working American families.

Statement on Congressional Action on Homeland Security Legislation
October 7, 2005

I applaud the Congress for its work on the homeland security legislation. The resources provided by this bill will help us protect our borders, upgrade explosives detection technology in our airports, address radiological and nuclear threats, and target security funding to areas with the greatest need. The legislation will help make our homeland more secure.

The President's Radio Address
October 8, 2005

Good morning. This week I nominated an exceptional individual to replace retiring Justice Sandra Day O'Connor on the Supreme Court of the United States. Harriet Miers is a remarkable woman and an accomplished attorney. She has wide experience in the courtroom and at the highest levels of government, and she will be an outstanding addition to our Nation's highest Court.

Harriet Miers was born and raised in Dallas, Texas, where she attended the public schools. When illness struck her family, Harriet went to work to help pay for her own college education. She stayed close to home in Dallas to attend Southern Methodist University and received a bachelor's degree in mathematics.

She remained at SMU for law school and earned a place on the law review. After graduation, she was hired for a prestigious 2-year clerkship for a Federal trial judge. From there, she went on to an extraordinary career in private practice and public service and became a pioneer for women lawyers. She was the first woman to be hired at her law firm, the first woman to become president of that firm, the first woman to lead a large law firm in the State of Texas, the first woman head of the Dallas Bar Association, and the first woman elected as president of the State Bar of Texas.

In her law practice, Ms. Miers handled hundreds of cases in State and Federal courts, from massive commercial litigation to criminal cases to civil disputes. She served in local government on the Dallas City Council and later held office in State government as well.

As Ms. Miers rose through the legal ranks, she also put in long hours of volunteer legal work on behalf of the poor and underprivileged, and served as a leader for more than a dozen community groups and charities. Beginning in the 1990s, Harriet Miers was regularly rated one of the top 100 lawyers in America and one of the top 50 women lawyers in the country.

Because of her skill and record of remarkable achievement, in 2001, I asked her to work in my administration. For the past 5 years, Harriet Miers has served our Nation in critical roles, including White House Counsel, one of the most important legal positions in the country. As counsel, Ms. Miers addresses complex matters of constitutional law, serves as the chief legal advisor during regular meetings of the National Security Council, and handles sensitive issues of executive-congressional relations, among many other essential duties. She has led the effort to help nominate outstanding judges for the Federal judiciary. She was in charge of the process that

resulted in the appointment of Chief Justice John Roberts.

Harriet Miers would come to the Supreme Court with a background in private practice and high-government service, and this puts her in strong company. Indeed, since 1933, 10 of the 34 Justices came to the Supreme Court directly from positions in the executive branch, such as the one Ms. Miers now holds. And no Supreme Court nominee in the last 35 years has exceeded Harriet Miers's overall range of experience in courtroom litigation; service in Federal, State, and local government; leadership in local, State, and national bar associations; and pro bono and charitable activities.

Throughout her life, Ms. Miers has excelled at everything she has done. She's been a leader and a trailblazer for women lawyers, and her work has earned the respect of attorneys across the Nation. I chose Harriet Miers for the Court both because of her accomplishments and because I know her character and her judicial philosophy. Harriet Miers will be the type of judge I said I would nominate, a good, conservative judge.

She shares my belief that judges should strictly interpret the Constitution and laws, not legislate from the bench. She understands that the role of a judge is to interpret the text of the Constitution and statutes as written, not as he or she might wish they were written. And she knows that judges should have a restrained and modest role in our constitutional democracy. Like Justice William Rehnquist and Justice Byron White, who were also nominated to the Supreme Court directly from legal positions in the executive branch, Harriet Miers will be prudent in exercising judicial power and firm in defending judicial independence.

When she goes before the Senate, I am confident that all Americans will see what I see every day: Harriet Miers is a woman of intelligence, strength, and conviction. And when she is confirmed by the Senate, I am confident that she will leave a lasting mark on the Supreme Court and will be a Justice who makes all Americans proud.

Thank you for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 7:35 a.m. on October 7 in the Cabinet Room at the White House for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on October 8. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on October 7 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 Earthquake in Pakistan
October 8, 2005

The people of the United States offer our deepest sympathies for the loss of life and destruction caused by the earthquake that struck outside of Islamabad. Our initial deployments of assistance are underway, and we stand ready to provide additional assistance as needed. My thoughts and prayers are with those affected by this horrible tragedy.

Interview With Matt Lauer of NBC's "Today" Show in Covington, Louisiana
October 11, 2005

Mr. Lauer. Two of the volunteers this morning are the President of the United States and the First Lady. President Bush, good to see you again; Mrs. Bush, nice to have you here.

The First Lady. Hi, Matt.

Recovery From Hurricanes Katrina and Rita

Mr. Lauer. Eight trips to this region for you since September 2d—six, I believe, for you, Mrs. Bush. Give me a sense of the biggest change you've seen over the past 6 or 7 weeks in this area.

The President. I think we've seen the spirits change. I mean, the storm hit; it was an overwhelming moment for a lot of people. And then they're beginning to realize, people—the local people are beginning to realize there's hope; there's a chance to rebuild lives. And a lot of people care about them.

I've seen some infrastructure change. The debris is being cleared, and roads are being rebuilt. And it's a remarkable spirit here in this part of the world. I mean, people say, "Look, we're going to rebuild our lives," and they've realized a lot of people from around the country want to help them.

Schools in Flood Ravaged Areas

Mr. Lauer. And as you see the progress, you also see how much remains to be done.

The First Lady. Sure.

Mr. Lauer. Schools still need to be reopened——

The First Lady. That's true.

Mr. Lauer. ——health facilities and all that sort of thing.

The First Lady. Well, I'm worried about the schools. I'm really interested in that. But I'm also proud that so many people have gone to school, so many parents have put their kids in school wherever they are, if they're in Houston or Fort Worth or Baton Rouge or wherever, and I think that's really important.

Responsibility for Response to Hurricanes

Mr. Lauer. So much more visibility on your part, President Bush, following Hurricane Rita and, as I mentioned, the eight trips to this region, as compared to what was seen as a slow and inefficient Federal response after Hurricane Katrina. Is this one of those situations where you're trying to get a second chance to make a first impression?

The President. I do my job as best I can. One of the things that we do is we respond to crises. And as I told the people, if I didn't respond well enough, we're going to learn the lessons. If there's any mistakes made at the Federal level, I, of course, accept responsibility for them.

On the other hand, there's a lot of good that's taken place, a lot of people are working hard. We had chopper drivers pulling people off roofs. We had, you know, people working long hours to save lives, and the story will unfold. I mean, the facts of the story will come out over time, and the important thing is for Federal, State, and local governments to adjust and to respond.

Plans for Rebuilding

Mr. Lauer. I talked to a prominent Democrat in Louisiana who has said that this type of appearance, while it's great to see you guys rolling up your sleeves and grabbing a hammer and helping with this piece of wall here, that it's a photo op, and they want to see a plan on paper, your plan to rebuild this region. Do you have that kind of a plan?

The President. Well, Matt, you see, I don't think Washington ought to dictate to

New Orleans how to rebuild. I guess we have a different philosophy than whoever the prominent Democrat was you spoke to. Last night Laura and I had dinner with Mayor Nagin and a group of distinguished New Orleans citizens from all walks of life. And my message to them was, "We will support the plan that you develop."

The point is, is that it comes from the local folks. And I recognize there's an attitude in Washington that says, "We know better than the local people." That's just not the attitude I have.

Forgiveness Clause

Mr. Lauer. There was recently a loan package approved by Congress, a billion dollars in emergency loans for the States hardest hit by hurricanes Katrina and Rita. That's the good news. Some Democrats complain that there was wording taken out of that loan package, a forgiveness clause that has traditionally been included in loan packages in the past. And they're wondering why these three States were singled out. Would you ask Congress to go back into that legislation and reinstate the forgiveness clause?

The President. I think Congress—what Congress said was—is that the previous loans were limited to a relatively small amount of money. These loans are much greater loans, and that what Congress has said is, "You'll have 5 years to repay, plus an additional 5 years to repay." And so I think it's a kind of package that Congress was comfortable with giving, and I was happy to sign it.

Politics and Voluntarism in Disaster Relief

Mr. Lauer. Carolyn Maloney, who, as you know, is a Democrat from New York, a Congresswoman, said——

The President. You're quoting a lot of Democrats today, Matt. That's interesting. [*Laughter*]

Mr. Lauer. She said that we aren't asking the people of Iraq to pay back the money we're spending there. Why are we asking the people of the gulf coast, requiring them to pay back this money? How would you respond to that?

The President. Well, the people of Iraq are paying a heavy price for terrorism. A lot of people are dying, Matt. These people are working hard to establish democracy, and they're paying a serious price. Look, I understand there are a lot of politics. One of the things that I suggested was we keep the politics out of New Orleans and Mississippi as we all work together to rebuild these communities. And we've got people here who volunteered their time, from all over the country, and they didn't say, you know, "I'm a Democrat, and I'm going to work here," or, "I'm a Republican, and I'm going to come and work here." They said, "I'm an American that wants to contribute."

And the reason why Laura and I are here is because we want to encourage other Americans to help somebody find shelter or help somebody find food or to continue to express the incredible compassion that the country saw when displaced persons moved from this part of the world and are scattered around the country.

Mr. Lauer. Which is a good point. So in other words, if someone says to you, "Okay, you're moving a wall today, and it's a photo op," but if that inspires someone else in another community to move a wall and grab a hammer, then that's mission accomplished?

The First Lady. That's right. And also, this gives us a chance to thank the people who do this all the time, not just in a crisis situation but who volunteer with Habitat in their towns wherever they are across the country or volunteer in a million other ways—working in schools or other ways. And this is really, really important, and it's very American to step out and help.

The President. I understand there's a lot of politics, and you keep talking about this politician or that politician. I think our job

is to elevate this whole process out of normal politics. Frankly, we're supposed to——

Mr. Lauer. Is that possible, though? I mean, isn't it inevitable it will be bogged down in politics?

The President. It depends on who asks the questions, I guess. I think most Americans aren't interested in this kind of politics. I think most Americans are interested in contributing. And the amazing thing about Katrina and Rita is that there has been a fantastic response by people from all walks of life that have welcomed a neighbor and said, "Brother, what can I do to help you?" Or, "How can I show you love?" And I applaud the "Today" show and Habitat for Humanity and your partners in being a part of a larger picture of helping people rebuild their lives. It's a great contribution.

Associate Justice-Designate Harriet E. Miers

Mr. Lauer. While I have you here and while you don't have a hammer in your hand, can I ask you—well, you have it in your belt—[*laughter*]—about some things going on in Washington?

The President. Sure.

Mr. Lauer. A lot of criticism coming for your nominee to the Supreme Court, Harriet Miers, from conservatives, people like Trent Lott and Pat Buchanan and George Will and Bill Kristol. Were you taken off-guard a little bit, caught by surprise by the amount of criticism you're getting for Judge Miers?

The President. Well, you know, I made a decision to put somebody on the Court who hadn't been a part of what they call the judicial monastery. In other words—I listened, by the way, to people in the Senate who suggested, "Why don't you get somebody from the outside." And I figured that people are going to kind of question whether or not it made sense to bring somebody from outside the court.

I would remind those, one, that Harriet is an extraordinary, accomplished woman who has done a lot. As a matter of fact, she has consistently ranked as one of the top 50 women lawyers in the United States, that she has broken the glass ceiling. She has served as a great example. She is a brilliant person. And that just because she hasn't served on the bench doesn't mean that she can't be a great Supreme Court Justice.

Mr. Lauer. But you know, conservatives are worried about what's going to happen when she gets on the bench, and they're worried about what's going to happen in the future. And I get the feeling—and I'm not sure if this is too strong—I get the feeling some conservatives, President Bush, are feeling let down by you, and they're thinking they've supported you for so long and when an issue that is so important to them comes up, that you let them down. How would you answer that?

The President. My answer is Harriet Miers is going to be confirmed, and people will get to see why I put her on the bench. She is an extraordinary woman. She is——

Mr. Lauer. You said she is the most qualified candidate for the job——

The President. As I told you.

Mr. Lauer. ——would you agree with that?

The First Lady. Absolutely. Absolutely.

Mr. Lauer. You had pushed for a woman to be a nominee.

The First Lady. That's right. And I know Harriet well. I know how accomplished she is. I know how many times she's broken the glass ceiling, herself. She's a role model for young women around our country.

Mr. Lauer. Some are suggesting——

The First Lady. Not only that, she's very deliberate and thoughtful and will bring dignity to wherever she goes, but certainly to the Supreme Court she'll be really excellent.

Mr. Lauer. Some are suggesting there's a little possible sexism in the criticism of Judge Miers. How do you feel about that?

The First Lady. That's possible. I think that's possible. I think she is so accomplished, and I know—I think people are not looking at her accomplishments and not realizing that she was the first elected woman to be the head of the Texas Bar Association, for instance, and all the other things. She was the first woman managing partner of a major law firm. She was the first woman hired by a major law firm, her law firm.

The President. My attitude, Matt, is when people get to know her, they'll see why I picked her.

The First Lady. They will. In the confirmation hearings alone, they'll see that she—what she's like.

Mr. Lauer. I think the Washington Times has a story this morning that said they had about 27 Republican Senators have serious questions about Judge Miers—or about Harriet Miers——

The President. No, Judge Miers—well spoken.

Mr. Lauer. I was going to say—kind of getting ahead of myself here. So you are convinced that she will be confirmed?

The President. Absolutely. Not only am I convinced that she'll be confirmed; I'm convinced that she'll be a fine, great judge. And I'm convinced that she'll be the kind of—she won't change. I mean, the person I know is not the kind of person that is going to change her philosophy. And her philosophy is, is that she is not going to legislate from the bench. So I told the American people when I campaigned for President the type of judge I'll pick. I picked that type of person in John Roberts, and I picked that type of person in Harriet Miers.

Deputy Chief of Staff Karl Rove/CIA Employee's Identity Disclosure Investigation

Mr. Lauer. Your political guru, Karl Rove, is set to—or scheduled to testify before a grand jury for the fourth time this coming week, it seems, looking into the leak of a CIA agent's name. You've said if someone on your staff had anything to do with that leak, you'll take care of that person. Has Karl Rove looked you in the eye, Mr. President, and said, "I, in no way, bent or broke the rules or the law when it comes to this case"?

The President. Matt, I've also consistently said I'm not going to talk about the case. It's under review, so I'm not going to talk about it. Thank you for asking, but—on the other hand, the special prosecutor has made it clear—and made it clear—that he doesn't want anybody speculating or talking about the case, so I'm not going to talk about it.

Mr. Lauer. But does it worry you that they seem to have such an interest in Mr. Rove?

The President. I'm not going to talk about the case. I've been asked this a lot; my answer is consistent. The special prosecutor is conducting a very serious investigation. He's doing it in a very dignified way, by the way, and we'll see what he says.

Iraq

Mr. Lauer. Got a big date coming up in Iraq this coming week, on the 15th, a vote on the referendum on the constitution there. What do you expecting to happen there? And what are you expecting to happen in the days leading up to that vote?

The President. I expect violence, because there's a group of terrorists and killers who want to try to stop the advance of democracy in Iraq. I also expect people to vote, which is a remarkable achievement. We had a remarkable achievement last January when millions of people voted. They now have a chance to vote on a constitution that will help unify the country. And then they'll have a chance to vote, if the constitution passes, on a permanent government.

And so what you're seeing is the unfolding of a dual-track strategy. On the one hand, democracy is advancing, much to the

amazement of a lot of people, particularly people in the region. And on the other hand, we're working to train Iraqi troops so they can provide the security for a democracy to move forward.

Avian Flu

Mr. Lauer. I'm going to let you get back to work in a second. I'm just curious about one other subject, and you've spoken about this recently, this whole issue of a possible worldwide pandemic, this avian flu. You know, 60 people have died in Asia so far. They're worried that if this comes here, there are, by some estimates—this could claim millions of lives around the world.

After Hurricane Katrina, there are some people in this country who are worried. They're not sure who's in charge, who do I turn to, who's going to handle a major catastrophe in this country? Are you confident that this administration has a plan in place to handle something like that?

The President. I'm confident that we're working to identify the possible outbreak of avian flu, contain it to where the outbreak takes place, and strategize how to deal with it if it ever were to come to the United States.

Mr. Lauer. Who would take the lead in that? Would it be a military situation? Would it be homeland security?

The President. It's a really interesting question, and it's one that I raised that has created a little bit of consternation among some. I have said that there may be a catastrophic event such that the Federal Government has got the—it's only the Federal Government that has got the capacity to move in quickly with a lot of resources, which would require law changes. For example, the military cannot become police without a special proclamation.

And so we're planning all this out. We're in the midst of, one, identifying that there may be a problem, and, two, what to do about it. When I have a plan that I'm comfortable with, of course I will talk to the American people about it.

Voluntarism

Mr. Lauer. Your husband has been through an awful lot——

The First Lady. Our country has been through an awful lot.

Mr. Lauer. What toll have you seen this take, personally, on him? Not only—you know, we had 9/11 in the first term, and now we've got Iraq, and we've got Katrina, and we've got Rita. What toll have you seen this take?

The First Lady. Well——

The President. He can barely stand. He's about to drop on the spot. [*Laughter*]

The First Lady. He's doing great. He's got big, broad shoulders. There's a lot, but there's a lot on the American people too, and their response has been so terrific. You know, we can face challenges, and they're tough, and this is very tough down here. The number of people, the huge number of people that are displaced, that have lost everything, but you know, people are rebuilding their lives, and other people want to help them, and that's what I see.

The President. You know, I'm the kind of guy who gets inspired by the decency of others, and as I travel the country and see this incredible spirit, it's so uplifting. It makes me understand how blessed we are to be an American. These folks right here—I never met them before, but they're from all over the country. They're here for one reason, to love a neighbor. And that's a remarkable expression. And Laura and I want to thank them, and we want to encourage others around the country to do—to follow their lead and follow their example.

Mr. Lauer. Well, this is going to be the home of the Collins family, and we're going to talk to the Collins family in a little while.

The First Lady. That's great.

Mr. Lauer. Mrs. Bush, President Bush, thanks so much for your time this morning.

The President. Thanks, Matt, appreciate it.

The First Lady. Thanks, Matt.

Mr. Lauer. Grab your hammers, and go back to work. [*Laughter*]

NOTE: The interview was taped at 6:07 a.m. at the Habitat for Humanity site for later broadcast. In his remarks, the President referred to Mayor C. Ray Nagin of New Orleans, LA; and Patrick J. Fitzgerald, U.S. Attorney for the Northern District of Illinois, and Department of Justice CIA leak investigation Special Prosecutor.

Remarks to Reporters in Pass Christian, Mississippi
October 11, 2005

Listen, first I want to thank the superintendent for inviting us here. The schools of Pass Christian are blue ribbon schools. And they have been blue ribbon schools before, and they'll be blue ribbon schools in the future. Part of the health of a community is to have a school system that's vibrant and alive. And in spite of the fact that a lot of equipment was damaged and homes destroyed and teachers without places to live and—this school district is strong, and it's coming back. And it's a sign that out of the rubble here on the gulf coast of Mississippi is a rebuilding, is a spirit of rebuilding.

And thank you all for having us. I want to thank the principals and teachers for understanding the quality of education—the quality of the education in a community helps define the nature of the community. And one of the things that's interesting is the high school principal told Laura and me that the—and Madam Secretary—that the high school was deemed to be a blue ribbon high school after Katrina hit. And yet a lot of the students don't know that yet. And so when the high school comes back next Monday, the first thing the principal is going to tell them is that the school that they go to, even though the building is different—the buildings are different—is a blue ribbon high school.

And the superintendent says, blue ribbon high school last year, this year, and next year. And I appreciate your spirit. Thanks for letting us come by.

Thank you all. Bye-bye. Good to meet you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:54 a.m. at DeLisle Elementary School. In his remarks, he referred to Sue Matheson, superintendent, Pass Christian School District; Cathy Broadway, principal, Pass Christian High School; and Secretary of Education Margaret Spellings.

Remarks at the Joint Reserve Base at the U.S. Naval Air Station in New Orleans, Louisiana
October 11, 2005

Generals, thanks—General Landreneau and General Downer, thank you all for greeting me here. I'm proud to be traveling with Members of the United States Congress who are with us today. Listen, I'm here to thank you all for what has been

an incredible outpouring of talent and skill and compassion to help the good folks of this part of the world that have suffered mightily. I'm incredibly proud of those who wear our Nation's uniform, and I'm incredibly proud of the job you have done. You have brought great credit to your units, credit to your family, and credit to our Nation.

We've got a lot of work to do, and I'll be telling the people that I've had an honor to meet, opportunity to meet, that out of this rubble is going to come some good, out of the devastation is going to come new cities and new hope. And I hope you take great inspiration in being a part of the renewal of this important part of the world.

I want you to, when you talk to your families, to tell them the Commander in Chief is proud of them as—I'm equally as proud of them as I am proud of you.

May God bless you all and your work. May God bless your families, and may God continue to bless our great country. Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:29 p.m. In his remarks, he referred to Maj. Gen. Bennett C. Landreneau, Adjutant General, and Brig. Gen. Huntington B. Downer, Jr., Assistant Adjutant General, Louisiana National Guard.

Message on the Observance of Yom Kippur, 5766
October 11, 2005

Seek the Lord while He may be found, call unto Him while He is near.

Isaiah 55:6

Yom Kippur is the Sabbath of Sabbaths, the most solemn day of the Jewish calendar. On this day, Jews around the world reflect on their lives and give thanks to God for their many blessings. The Rabbis teach that on Yom Kippur, God holds open the gates of Heaven and listens to every word of every prayer. As those final prayers are shared and the Shofar is sounded, God remembers every name—those living and those departed. In this moment, we draw near to God, sharing in the wonders of all creation and the miracle of all life.

Yom Kippur teaches us that we merit forgiveness and mercy through repentance, prayer, and acts of charity. May we have the strength to achieve all these things, so that we continue to build a more hopeful Nation and a more peaceful and free world.

Laura and I send our best wishes for a blessed day.

GEORGE W. BUSH

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

Remarks Following Discussions With President Aleksander Kwasniewski of Poland and an Exchange With Reporters
October 12, 2005

President Bush. Thank you all for coming. I'll have a statement; Aleksander will have a statement. We'll be glad to answer two questions per side.

Welcome back. This is a happy moment, because I get to see my friend again. It's a sad moment, because he is leaving office. He has done an extraordinary job. We have built a strong personal relationship, but more importantly, we have a strong strategic relationship with Poland, thanks to your leadership.

Aleksander has helped advance the cause of peace by advancing the cause of freedom. He has served as a mentor for new democracies in the neighborhood. He has proven that you can be a friend to the United States and a loyal member of the EU at the same time. We have worked hard together to improve the lots of both our peoples.

And, Mr. President, you can leave with your—your office with your head held high because of the fine job you have done. I am glad you came back, and it's an honor to be able to praise you to the people of your country for a job—a fine job.

President Kwasniewski. Thank you, sir.

President Bush. Hold on, we're going to a little——

President Kwasniewski. Yes. Thank you for——

President Bush. Do want to do an interpretation?

President Kwasniewski. Yes, I think interpretation is better.

President Bush. Especially after what I just said. [*Laughter*]

President Kwasniewski. I want to thank you very much, Mr. President. I want to thank you very much for those nice words. It is true that this visit is both a farewell visit and a visit that is a recapitulation of 10 years of my Presidency and 10 years of Polish-American relations between our two countries.

I started my Presidency in a different world, and now I'm leaving the office when the world is different and the world now is better, I believe. We are together in NATO. We are in NATO together with other Central and Eastern European countries. We are in NATO, together with the Baltic States, and we are also together in a group, in fact, family. Together we are building peace and stability in different parts of the world. We are fighting together against terrorism. We are fulfilling our task with joy and satisfaction, and we do it effectively. And together we are bringing more peace and more democracy to the world. We are also creating more values for the humanity. We are fighting for human rights and for the dignity of human beings.

And we have been cooperating together with President Bush, and we have made together very hard and very difficult and very important decisions. Today we talked about what we have done together, and we have also talked about the fact that we will be continuing the policy of cooperation between the two countries and that the new Polish government and my successor in the Presidential office will continue this policy in the years to come.

I want to say that I'm very happy that we are enjoying and following the values between Polish and American cooperation and that we are developing our contacts. We have summed up our bilateral cooperation. There is still very much ahead of us, and here, as you can see here on the table next to President Bush, there is a document that I have presented to him, and this document is the recapitulation of our achievement, and it is also the information about our future cooperation. It's also the encouragement to cooperate in the future.

President Bush. Thank you.

We'll take a couple of questions. Diedra [Nedra Pickler, Associated Press].

Associate Justice-Designate Harriet E. Miers

Q. Thank you, Mr. President. Why do people in this White House feel it's necessary to tell your supporters that Harriet Miers attends a very conservative Christian church? Is that your strategy to repair the divide that has developed among conservatives over her nomination?

President Bush. People ask me why I picked Harriet Miers. They want to know Harriet Miers's background. They want to know as much as they possibly can before they form opinions. And part of Harriet Miers's life is her religion. Part of it has to do with the fact that she was a pioneer woman and a trailblazer in the law in Texas. I remind people that Harriet Miers is one of the—has been rated consistently one of the top 50 women lawyers in the United States. She's eminently qualified for the job. And she has got a judicial philosophy that I appreciate. Otherwise I wouldn't have named her to the bench, which is—or nominated her to the bench—which is that she will not legislate from the bench but strictly interpret the Constitution.

So our outreach program has been just to explain the facts to people. But more importantly, Harriet is going to be able to explain the facts to the people when she testifies. And people are going to see why I named her—nominated her to the bench, and she's going to make a great Supreme Court judge.

Poland-U.S. Relations

Q. Mr. President, President Bush, there is a significant change of power underway in Poland right now. Some have already said that they would ask for more from the United States in return for Polish support and continued engagement in Iraq. Are you aware of these positions, and do you expect any changes in Polish-American relations, any tougher talk, maybe?

President Bush. Well, we had a talk about who might succeed Aleksander and their opinions. My advice would be for whoever succeeds the President to come and visit and to exchange visits with foreign ministers, such as our foreign minister as well as our minister of defense and to strategize. That's what friends do. They share concerns and share goals, and then work together to satisfy concerns and achieve goals. And I'm confident that's going to happen.

President Kwasniewski. I would like to add a few words for the Polish media here. We have talked about this, and I think that this is information important for the Polish media. Poland wants the stabilization mission in Iraq to be a success and to complete with success. We want to be a serious partner, and we want to be a steadfast and loyal partner in the coalition. Our troops are in Iraq, and they will stay in Iraq until the end of January, and the decision has been made and nothing changes here. But we have to think about the future, and we have to respect the right of the new government and the right of the new President to make their decisions about it.

It was the right suggestion of President George W. Bush, and the decision will be forwarded by me to our authorities and people in Poland when I come back, that after the new government is established, the new Polish Defense Minister and the Foreign Minister should come here to Washington to talk about the future, because the future goes far beyond January next year. And we have to talk about what we shall do together to continue this cause.

President Bush. Caren [Caren Bohan, Reuters].

Syria

Q. Thank you, sir. The Syrian Interior Minister has committed suicide. What are the consequences for Syria if they are implicated in the murder of the former Lebanese Prime Minister?

President Bush. I don't want to prejudge the report that's coming out, the Mehlis report. I think it's very important for Syria to understand that the free world respects Lebanese democracy and expects Syria to honor that democracy. It's one thing to have been asked to remove troops and all intelligence services. Now the world wants for—expects Syria to honor the democracy in the country of Lebanon.

Secondly, we expect Syria to do everything in her power to shut down the transshipment of suiciders and killers into Iraq. We expect Syria to be a good neighbor to Iraq. We expect Syria not to agitate killers in the Palestinian Territory. We're making good progress toward peace in the Holy Land, but one of the areas of concern is that foreign countries, such as Syria, might try to disrupt the peace process through encouraging terrorist activities.

So we have a lot of expectations for Syria beyond just the Mehlis report. But let's see how the Mehlis report—what it says. In the meantime, we'll continue to work with friends and allies to send a clear message to the Asad Government, there are expectations involved for countries that want to be accepted in the international community.

Go ahead.

Russia

Q. It's a question for President Bush. Mr. President, we thought that your last summit between America and Russian leaders, American diplomacy was stepping up the pressure on Moscow in reference to causes of democratic reforms in that country and the situation in Chechnya. And right now we have a long list of problems between Poland and Russia. So what's your point of view and what would be your advice for a new Polish government, how we should handle that situation?

President Bush. We've got—I've got good relations with President Putin; America has got a working relationship with Russia. And always, as a part of our discussions with Russia is my personal—when I have personal discussions with him, I remind him of my deep faith in democracy, and the people that interrelate with Russia from my Government remind their Russian counterparts about democracy and its importance.

The reason I believe in democracy so strongly is because I believe in freedom, and democracy is a manifestation of free societies. I believe there's a desire for everybody to be free. I also know that free societies are peaceful societies. One of the goals of this administration is to promote peace, and the more democracy and the more freedom there is, the more likely it is the world will be peaceful.

So we've got a consistent message to Russia, and that is that one should not fear democracy; one should embrace democracy. Now, having said that, I recognize that Russian democracy will be different from the United States. We don't expect every country to look like us. We just expect people to embrace some universal truths, the right of people to worship freely, the right of women to be able to equally participate in society—which is the case in Russia, of course—the rule of law, the respect for private property. These are fundamental, basic principles that we believe should be inherent in all societies. People need to make those choices themselves, but one of the roles of the United States is to remind people about how beneficial a democratic society can be to its people. And so we're consistent in our message.

Thank you all very much.

President Kwasniewski. Thank you. You see, this is the difference between the President in power—you have many questions—and the President who has finished his job—no questions. [*Laughter*] Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:54 a.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to President Bashar al-Asad of Syria; Detlev Mehlis, head, United Nations International Independent Investigation Commission into the assassination of former Lebanese Prime Minister Rafiq Hariri; and President Vladimir Putin of Russia. President Kwasniewski spoke in Polish, and his remarks were translated by an interpreter.

Memorandum on the National Flood Insurance Program
October 12, 2005

Memorandum for the Secretary of Homeland Security

Subject: National Flood Insurance Program

I have reviewed your request for approval to issue notes to the Secretary of the Treasury in excess of $1.5 billion, but not to exceed $3.5 billion, for the National Flood Insurance Program and hereby grant approval for you to do so.

GEORGE W. BUSH

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

Teleconference Remarks With United States Troops in Iraq
October 13, 2005

The President. Captain Kennedy?

Capt. Brent Kennedy. Yes, Mr. President.

The President. Well, it's good to see you. Thanks. Thanks for taking time out of your busy schedule to allow me to visit with you a little bit. I've got some questions for you here in a minute, but I do want to share some thoughts with you.

First, I want to thank the members of the 42d Infantry Division and Task Force Liberty for serving our country with such distinction and honor. I want you to know that the mission you are on is vital to achieving peace and to protecting America. One of my most solemn duties, a duty that you have joined me on, is to protect the American people.

And we're facing an enemy that is ruthless and coldblooded, an enemy that actually has a philosophy, and the philosophy is so opposite of ours. It is the exact opposite of what America stands for. We stand for religious freedom and freedom to speak and women's rights and capacity for people to realize their dreams. They stand for a vision that is—doesn't believe in freedom, that if you don't agree with their narrow point of view, that you're subject to reprisal.

And so I want to thank you for being a part of this global war. And Iraq is a part of the war, because the enemy understands that a free Iraq will be a blow to their vision and their strategy of spreading dominance throughout the broader Middle East. And so I want to thank you. When you e-mail your families, you tell them how proud the Commander in Chief is of their patience and their support as well.

One of the tactics of the enemy is to shake our will. Part of their strategy is to use the killing of innocent people to get the American Government to pull you out of there before the mission is complete. I'm going to assure you of this, that so long as I'm the President, we're never going to back down; we're never going to give in; we'll never accept anything less than total victory. It's important for you to know that. It's important for the enemy to know that as well.

We've got a strategy, and it's a clear strategy. On the one hand, we will hunt down these killers and terrorists and bring them to justice and train the Iraqi forces to join us in that effort. The second part of the strategy is a political strategy, based upon the knowledge that you defeat a backward, dark philosophy with one that's hopeful. And that hopeful philosophy is one

based upon universal freedom. I'm very impressed that the Iraqi Government has continued to work to have a constitution that attracts Sunnis and Shi'as and Kurds. They've worked hard to get a constitution, and now the people of Iraq are going to get to vote once again, on a constitution, in this case.

And I want to thank you for providing the security necessary for people to exercise their free will. You're part of an historic mission that is laying the foundation for peace. I am convinced that when we look back at this time in history, those who follow us, whether it be in the armed services or in the political process, will say, "Thank goodness the United States of America didn't lose our nerve or will, that we've put in motion something that can't be stopped," and that is the march of freedom.

So I want to thank you for giving me a chance to visit with you. You just got to know the American people are proud of you. You've got tremendous support here at home, and there's nobody more proud of you than I am.

Let me ask you some questions, Captain, if you don't mind. One of the, you know, questions I have is about the pre-election operations, about what you've been doing, and what are the—what's your strategy, and how do you think it's going for—to make sure the people have a chance to vote.

By the way, you're in Tikrit, as I understand it as well. It's kind of an interesting place to be. It's Saddam's old stomping grounds.

Capt. Kennedy. Good morning, Mr. President, from Tikrit. I'm Captain Brent Kennedy. To my right is Sergeant Major Akeel from the 5th Iraqi Army Division. We're working together here with the Iraqis in Task Force Liberty for the upcoming referendum. We're surging in an operation, called Operation Saratoga, that includes the securing of over 1,250 polling sites. We're working right alongside with the Iraqis as they lead the way in securing these sites.

The President. That's good. And so, like—I mean, and so the vote is in less than 48 hours—or about 48 hours, I guess. And so how do you—how would—are you confident? I mean, how do you feel like the operations are going?

Capt. Kennedy. Mr. President, I'm going to field that question to Captain Smith.

The President. I didn't want to give you—I didn't want to throw you a hardball there, Captain.

Capt. David J. Smith. Morning, Mr. President. I'm Captain Dave Smith from Grand Rapids, Michigan. I'm representing the 3d Brigade Combat Team here in—headquartered in Ba'quba.

The President. Right.

Capt. Smith. I work directly with the Iraqi army. I am responsible for coordinating all their security responses in our area of operations.

Sir, our Iraqi partners have been conducting battalion and brigade-size operations since April. They have been planning and coordinating with other Iraqi security forces, such as the Iraqi police and local government agencies, preparing for this referendum. Sir, we as coalition forces, we have taken a supporting role only as they prepare to execute this referendum.

The President. How are they doing? Give us an assessment. One of the things, Captain, that people in America want to know is, one, do the Iraqis want to fight, and are they capable of fighting? And maybe somebody can give us an appraisal.

Capt. Kennedy. Mr. President, I'm going to field that question to Captain Pratt.

Capt. Stephen N. Pratt. Good morning, Mr. President. My name is Captain Stephen Pratt from Pocatello, Idaho, serving with the 116th Brigade Combat Team as the Iraqi army coordinator. The Iraqi army and police services, along with coalition support, have conducted many and multiple exercises and rehearsals. Recently we've conducted a command post exercise in which we brought together these Iraqi security forces with emergency service units

and the joint coordination center, in which we all sat around a terrain model and discussed what each one would do at their specific location and what they would do at the referendum.

It was impressive to me to see the cooperation and the communication that took place among the Iraqi forces. Along with the coalition's backing them, we'll have a very successful and effective referendum vote.

The President. Captain, thank you very much. Let me ask you something. As you move around, I presume you have a chance to interface with the civilians there in that part of the world. And a lot of Americans are wondering whether or not people appreciate your presence or whether or not the people are anxious to be part of the democratic process. Can you give us a sense for the reception of the people there in Tikrit toward coalition forces as well as the Iraqi units that they encounter?

Capt. Kennedy. Mr. President, I'm going to field this question to Captain Williams.

Capt. David Williams. Mr. President, I'm Captain David Williams. I'm from Los Angeles, California. I'm currently with the 1st Brigade Combat Team, attached to the Military Transition Team. Sir, in north-central Iraq, voter registration is up 17 percent. That's 400,000 new voters in north-central Iraq and 100,000 new voters in the al Salah ad Din Province. Sir, I was with my Iraqi counterpart in Tikrit, the city Tikrit last week, and he was going around talking to the locals. And from what he told me that the locals told him, the Iraqi people are ready and eager to vote in this referendum.

The President. That's good. It's pretty interesting. That's a pretty interesting concept for the people of Tikrit, when you really think about the fact that that was Saddam Hussein's hometown. They didn't get to vote too often when he was the leader there. Let me ask you about the progress. Most of you have been there for nearly a year, as I understand it.

And is it possible to give us a sense, kind of a calibration of what life was like when you first got there and what it's like today?

Capt. Kennedy. Mr. President, Master Sergeant Lombardo will answer this question.

M. Sgt. Corine Lombardo. Good morning, Mr. President. I'm Master Sergeant Corine Lombardo, with the Headquarters 42d Infantry Division and Task Force Liberty, from Scotia, New York. First, I'd like to say that this is a pleasure to speak with you again. We had the honor of your visit in New York City on November 11th, in 2001, when you recognized our Rainbow Soldiers for their recovery and rescue efforts at Ground Zero.

The President. Were you there?

M. Sgt. Lombardo. We began our fight against terrorism in the wake of 9/11, and we're proud to continue it here in north-central New York—north-central Iraq.

The President. Let me ask you something. Were you there when I came to New York?

M. Sgt. Lombardo. Yes, I was, Mr. President.

The President. I thought you looked familiar. [*Laughter*]

M. Sgt. Lombardo. Well, thank you.

The President. I probably look familiar to you too. [*Laughter*]

M. Sgt. Lombardo. Yes, you do, Mr. President. I can tell you over the past 10 months, we've seen a tremendous increase in the capabilities and the confidences of our Iraqi security force partners. We've been working side by side, training and equipping 18 Iraqi army battalions. Since we began our partnership, they have improved greatly, and they continue to develop and grow into sustainable forces. Over the next month, we anticipate seeing at least one-third of those Iraqi forces conducting independent operations.

The President. That's important. The American people have got to know—and I appreciate you bringing that up, Sergeant

Major, about how—what the progress is like. In other words, we've got a measurement system——

M. Sgt. Lombardo. Well, together——

The President. I'm sorry, go ahead.

M. Sgt. Lombardo. I'm sorry—just, together with our coalition forces, we've captured over 50 terrorists as well as detained thousands of others that have ties to the insurgency. And I believe it is these accomplishments and the numerous accomplishments from our task force that will provide a safe and secure environment for the referendum vote.

The President. Well, I appreciate that. There's no question that we need to stay on the offense. And we need to stay on the offense with well-trained Iraqi forces, side by side the finest military ever to exist, and that's the United States military.

M. Sgt. Lombardo. That it is, Mr. President. Thank you.

The President. Yes. Sergeant Akeel, thanks for joining us. I appreciate—appreciate your service. You've got something to say, Akeel?

Sgt. Maj. Shaker Nassir Akeel. Good morning, Mr. President. Thank you for everything. Thank very much for everything.

The President. Yes, you're welcome.

Sgt. Maj. Akeel. I like you. [*Laughter*]

The President. Well, I appreciate that.

1st Lt. Gregg A. Murphy. Good morning, Mr. President.

The President. Go ahead.

1st Lt. Murphy. I'm First Lieutenant Gregg Murphy from the 278th Regimental Combat Team, from the Volunteer State of Tennessee. I want to tell you, sir, that we appreciate you coming with us today for this interview and hearing us express our confidence in the Iraqi security forces' role in the upcoming referendum. Sir, we are prepared to do whatever it takes to make this thing a success. But the important thing here is that the Iraqi army and the Iraqi security forces, they're ready, and they're committed. They're going to make this thing happen.

Back in January, when we were preparing for that election, we had to lead the way. We set up the coordination. We made the plan. We're really happy to see, during the preparation for this one, sir, they're doing everything. They're making the plans. They're calling each other. They've got it laid out. So on Saturday, sir, we're going to be beside them. We're going to be there to support them through anything. But we can't wait to share in their success with them on Sunday.

Sir, from all of us here at Task Force Liberty here in Tikrit, we want to express our gratitude to you for spending a little time with us this morning, and thank you, sir, for hearing our assessment of the current situation here in Tikrit, Iraq.

The President. Well, Lieutenant, thanks. It's been my honor. And you know, I wish I could be there to see you face to face, to thank you personally. It's probably a little early for me to go to Tikrit, but one of these days perhaps the situation will be such that I'll be able to get back to Iraq to not only thank our troops but to thank those brave Iraqis who are standing strong in the face of these foreign fighters and these radicals that are trying to stop the march of freedom.

Again, I want to thank you all for being so courageous and for stepping up when the United States of America needed you. I repeat what I said earlier: Please give your loved ones my deepest respect. And you've got to know, the American people are standing strong with you. We're proud of you. May God bless you all in your work, and when you get back to the States, you know, if I'm hanging around, come by and say hello. [*Laughter*]

Thank you all.

NOTE: The teleconference began at 9:54 a.m. The President spoke from Room 350 of the Dwight D. Eisenhower Executive Office Building to troops in Tikrit, Iraq. In his remarks, he referred to former President Saddam Hussein of Iraq. Participating in the

teleconference were Capt. Brent Kennedy, USA, Capt. David J. Smith, USA, Capt. Stephen N. Pratt, USA, Capt. David Williams, USA, M. Sgt. Corine Lombardo, USA, 1st Lt. Gregg A. Murphy, USA, S. Sgt. David Smith-Barry, USA, Sfc. Jerry R. Munoz, USA, Sgt. Dustin Giesbrecht, USA, and Sgt. Ronald E. Long, Jr., USA, 42d Infantry Division; and Sgt. Maj. Akeel Shaker Nassir, 4th Iraqi Army Division.

Remarks After Signing the Book of Condolences at the Embassy of Pakistan
October 14, 2005

Mr. Ambassador, thank you for having us. I'm here to express the condolences of the American people to those who suffered mightily as a result of the earthquake that struck your country. There's been a lot of loss of life, and Americans pray for those families who have lost a loved one.

There's been a lot of damage, and we want to help in any way we can. I told the Ambassador that—reminded him what I told President Musharraf—I said when I spoke to him, I said, "Pakistan is a friend, and America will help." We've moved a lot of military equipment in there. We're helping with humanitarian aid as well. And so not only will we offer our prayers, but we'll offer our help and help the people and help the Government, help this great nation get back on its feet.

Thank you for having us.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:46 a.m. In his remarks, he referred to Pakistan's Ambassador to the U.S. Jehangir Karamat; and President Pervez Musharraf of Pakistan.

The President's Radio Address
October 15, 2005

Good morning. This weekend is a momentous time in the history of the Middle East. After choosing their leaders in free elections in January, the Iraqi people have gone to the polls to vote on a democratic constitution. This Constitution is the result of months of debate and compromise by representatives of Iraq's diverse ethnic and religious communities. These leaders came together to produce a document that protects fundamental freedoms and lays the foundation for a lasting democracy. Earlier this week, the Iraqi people embraced changes to the text that have led to its endorsement by some Sunni leaders as well as Kurdish and Shi'a leaders. Now the people of Iraq will have the final say.

By casting their ballots, the Iraqi people deal a severe blow to the terrorists and send a clear message to the world: Iraqis will decide the future of their country through peaceful elections, not violent insurgency. And by their courageous example, they're charting a new course for the entire Middle East.

This weekend's election is a critical step forward in Iraq's march toward democracy, and with each step the Iraqi people take, Al Qaida's vision for the region becomes more remote. As Iraqis prepared for this

election, the world learned of a letter written by a leading terrorist explaining why Iraq is the central front in their war on civilization. Al Qaida's number-two leader, a man named Zawahiri, wrote to his chief deputy in Iraq, the terrorist Zarqawi. We intercepted this letter, and we have released it to the public. In it, Zawahiri lays out why Al Qaida views Iraq as "the place for the greatest battle" of our day.

He says that establishing Al Qaida's dominion over Iraq is the first step towards their larger goal of imposing Islamic radicalism across the broader Middle East. Zawahiri writes, and I quote, "The jihad in Iraq requires several incremental goals. The first stage: Expel the Americans from Iraq. The second stage: Establish an Islamic authority over as much territory as you can, to spread its power in Iraq. The third stage: Extend the jihad wave to the secular countries neighboring Iraq," end quote.

This letter shows that Al Qaida intends to make Iraq a terrorist haven and a staging ground for attacks against other nations, including the United States. The letter makes equally clear that the terrorists have a problem: Their campaign of murder and mayhem is turning the people against them. The letter warns Zarqawi that, quote, "Many of your Muslim admirers amongst the common folk are wondering about your attacks on the Shi'a," end quote. Even Al Qaida recognizes that with every random bombing and every funeral of a child, the Muslim world sees the terrorists for what they really are, murderers at war with the Iraqi people.

These terrorists are driven by an ideology that exploits Islam to serve a violent political vision: the establishment of a totalitarian empire that denies political and religious freedom. This is why the terrorists have fought to prevent and disrupt this weekend's elections. They understand that the act of voting is a rejection of them and their distorted vision of Islam. Simply by coming out to vote, the Iraqi people have shown that they want to live in freedom, and they will not accept a return to tyranny and terror.

The terrorists know their only chance for success is to break our will and force us to retreat. The Al Qaida letter points to Vietnam as a model. Zawahiri says, quote, "The aftermath of the collapse of American power in Vietnam and how they ran and left their agents is noteworthy," end quote. Al Qaida believes that America can be made to run again. They are gravely mistaken. America will not run, and we will not forget our responsibilities.

In Iraq, we have brought down a murderous regime. We have stood by the Iraqi people through two elections, and we will stand by them until they have established a free nation that can govern itself, sustain itself, and defend itself. When we do, Iraq will be an ally in the war on terror and a partner for peace and moderation in the Muslim world. And because America stood firm in this important fight, our children and grandchildren will be safer and more secure.

Thank you for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 7:50 a.m. on October 14 in the Cabinet Room at the White House for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on October 15. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on October 14 but was embargoed for release until the broadcast. In his address, the President referred to Ayman Al-Zawahiri, founder of the Egyptian Islamic Jihad and senior Al Qaida associate; and senior Al Qaida associate Abu Musab Al Zarqawi. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of this address.

Remarks on the Vote Approving the Iraqi Constitution
October 16, 2005

On behalf of the American people, I'd like to congratulate the people of Iraq for the successful completion of a vote on their draft constitution. By all indications, the turnout was greater than the turnout from the last January election, which is good news. By all indications, the Sunnis participated in greater numbers in this election than last time. And that's good news. After all, the purpose of a democracy is to make sure everybody is—participates in the process.

I'm also pleased, from the initial indications, that the level of violence was considerably less than the last election. That's a tribute to the Iraqis—forces who we've trained as well as coalition forces that worked hard to make sure that democracy could move forward in Iraq.

This is a very positive day for the Iraqis and as well for world peace. Democracies are peaceful countries. The vote today in Iraq stands in stark contrast to the attitudes and philosophy and strategy of Al Qaida and its terrorist friends and killers. We believe and the Iraqis believe the best way forward is through the democratic process. Al Qaida wants to use their violent ways to stop the march of democracy because democracy is the exact opposite of what they believe is right.

We're making progress toward peace. We're making progress toward an ally that will join us in the war on terror, that will prevent Al Qaida from establishing safe haven in Iraq, and a country that will serve as an example for others who aspire to live in freedom.

So, again, I congratulate the Iraqi people. I thank you for meeting this milestone. Thank you for doing what is right, to set the foundation for peace for future generations to come.

Appreciate it. Thank you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:47 p.m. on the South Grounds at the White House.

Remarks Following Discussions With President Georgi Purvanov of Bulgaria and an Exchange With Reporters
October 17, 2005

President Bush. We'll have opening statements, two questions a side. Welcome, Mr. President.

Mr. President, your country is a strategic ally. It's been my honor to welcome you to the Oval Office, and thank you for a wide-ranging discussion on a lot of important topics.

Bulgaria has been a valued partner in NATO. Your country has been a strong example for democracy. You understand, like I understand, that the march of democracy will lead to world peace. I want to thank you for being a part of a vast coalition that helped liberate 50 million people. We discussed important bilateral issues.

And I want to thank you again for coming. Thank you for your leadership, and thank you for your friendship.

President Purvanov. Thank you, Mr. President. Ladies and gentlemen, I would like to say how pleased I am with the discussions we just had with Mr. President. I am delighted that we had a chance to

reaffirm our specific partnership and to discuss—to go through the agenda of some specific issues related.

I do appreciate the support we have been receiving from the United States in becoming a reliable NATO member state and also in joining the European Union in time—that is, as of January '07. I value the high appreciation of Bulgaria's role as a stabilizing factor in the Balkans that we receive.

I had the chance to reaffirm Bulgaria's commitment to remain an ally in the—of the antiterrorist coalition. Of course, the specifics of that are going to be discussed on an expert level. I appreciate the opportunity to raise some concrete, specific issues and put on the table Bulgaria's ambitions to get its military modernized and to be involved in some energy products in the Balkans.

And I'm sure that after these meetings and talks, our institutions and the people concerned, the experts will have a lot of work to do in order to guarantee an influx of investment. I'm particularly pleased with this very frank—open and frank discussions we had.

President Bush. Thank you. Answer a couple of questions—hold a second, please. We'll go with the American side first. Deb [Deb Riechmann, Associated Press].

CIA Employee's Identity Disclosure Investigation

Q. Mr. President, would you expect a member of your administration to resign or take leave if they were indicted?

President Bush. Mr. President, there's an investigation going on. I've made it very clear to the press that I'm not going to discuss the investigation. And so therefore—and so my position hasn't changed since the last time I've been asked this question. There's a serious investigation. We're not going to—I'm not going to prejudge the outcome of the investigation.

Your question. Yes.

Bulgarian Nurses in Libya

Q. Mr. President, first, we remember 9/11, and we thank you for your leadership, sir. The question is, in Bulgarian public opinion knows quite well that the most important thing for us is to get our nurses back from the jail in Libya, because they're facing a firing squad, sir, after few weeks, if the verdict is confirmed. So, we are partners. You're the leader of the most powerful nation on Earth. Why don't you help us, sir?

President Bush. Do you want to interpret that?

[*At this point, the interpreter translated the question into Bulgarian, and President Bush continued.*]

We discussed this issue at length. Like the President, my heart breaks when young children get sick. The position of the United States Government is the nurses ought to be freed. We have made our position known to the Libyan Government. There's no confusion—there should be no confusion in the Libyan Government's mind. But those nurses ought to be not only spared their life but out of prison. And we will continue to make that message perfectly clear.

Steve [Steve Holland, Reuters].

Vote on Iraqi Constitution

Q. Sir, the vote on Saturday, does the Sunni vote against the Iraqi Constitution damage the political process? Will it increase the likelihood of violence and American sacrifice?

President Bush. My first reaction to the vote was that an increase in turnout was an indication that the Iraqi people are strongly in favor of settling disputes in a peaceful way, that they understand that working to find common ground on a constitution is much better for their future than relying upon killers and people who will kill innocent children and women for the sake of creating havoc.

Secondly, I was pleased to see that the Sunnis participated in the process. The idea of deciding to go into a ballot box is a positive development. The idea that people are willing to try to work out their political differences through a process, a peaceful process, is—stands in stark contrast to the Al Qaida types and the terrorists and the killers that are trying to drive the process through violence.

The way forward is clear. The political process will continue with a constitution, if finally ratified, and then an election, coupled with a security plan that continues to train Iraqis so they do the fight. The violence in this election was down from the previous election. And one of the reasons why is because the Iraqi forces took the fight to the enemy and provided security, which is really heartening to coalition forces and friends and allies.

So yesterday was a very hopeful day for peace. It's an exciting day for a country that only a few short years ago was ruled by a brutal tyrant. So I'm pleased with the progress being made.

Bulgaria's Role in the Balkans

Q. Mr. President, Bulgarian Telegraph Agency. What do you think of Bulgaria's role—of your ally, Bulgaria, as a regional leader in the Balkans?

President Bush. I think the—I watched your election—recent parliamentary elections very closely. The people voted, and then coalitions were formed for the good of the country. That's an example that many can learn from. There's nothing more wholesome than a young democracy not only setting an example for others but taking a lead in explaining to citizens that the best way to resolve differences is through a political process that is peaceful.

And so the President and I talked about Bulgaria's important role in taking the lead in helping young democracies grow in strength. We're laying the foundation for peace. Democracies are peaceful. They're at peace with their neighbors, and the Balkans needs peace. The Middle East needs peace. And working with friends like Bulgaria, we are laying that foundation for peace.

And I'm proud to have your friendship. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:53 a.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. President Purvanov and a reporter spoke in Bulgarian, and their remarks were translated by an interpreter.

Remarks Following a Meeting With Former Texas Supreme Court Justices
October 17, 2005

The President. I want to welcome some of my fellow Texans here in the Oval Office. We've got Republicans and Democrats, people who have been on the court, attorney generals. They're here to send a message here in Washington that the person I picked to take Sandra Day O'Connor's place is not only a person of high character and of integrity but a person who can get the job done.

Harriet Miers is a uniquely qualified person to serve on the bench. She is a smart—she is capable. She is a pioneer. She's been consistently ranked as one of the top 50 women lawyers in the United States. She has been a leader in the legal profession. She's impressed these folks. They know her well. They know that she'll bring excellence to the bench.

So I want to thank you all for coming. Thank you for being part of a group of

people who understand that Harriet Miers will be a superb Supreme Court judge.

Welcome. I'm glad you're here.

Justice Hill. Thank you. Mr. President, we just all want to thank you for this nomination. We're excited about it, and we're here to try to let the people of America know what we all know, that she is an absolutely fantastic person and a great lawyer and will make a great judge.

The President. Well, thank you, sir. Appreciate you coming. Thank you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:27 a.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. Participating in the meeting were former Chief Justice John L. Hill, Jr., former Associate Justice Greg Abbott, former Associate Justice James A. Baker, former Associate Justice Eugene A. Cook, former Associate Justice Craig T. Enoch, and former Associate Justice Raul A. Gonzalez, Texas Supreme Court.

Message to the Congress Giving Notice of Intent To Enter Into a Free Trade Agreement With Oman
October 17, 2005

To the Congress of the United States:

Consistent with section 2105(a)(1)(A) of the Trade Act of 2002, (Public Law 107–210)(the "Trade Act"), I am pleased to notify the Congress of my intention to enter into a Free Trade Agreement (FTA) with the Sultanate of Oman.

The Agreement will generate export opportunities for U.S. companies, farmers, and ranchers, help create jobs in the United States, and help American consumers save money while offering them more choices. Entering into an FTA with Oman will build on the FTAs that we already have with Israel, Jordan, and Morocco, as well as the FTA that we have concluded with Bahrain, and will be an important step on the path to fulfilling my vision of developing economic growth and democracy in the Middle East and creating a U.S.-Middle East Free Trade Area (MEFTA) by 2013.

Consistent with the Trade Act, I am sending this notification at least 90 days in advance of signing the FTA. My Administration looks forward to working with the Congress in developing appropriate legislation to approve and implement this Agreement.

GEORGE W. BUSH

The White House,
October 17, 2005.

NOTE: The notice is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

Remarks at the Iftaar Dinner
October 17, 2005

Please be seated. Thank you. Welcome to the White House. This is the fifth year in a row that it's been my honor to host an Iftaar in the State Dining Room.

Our distinguished guests represent the millions of Muslims that we're proud to call Americans, and many Islamic nations are represented here that America is proud

to call friend. We welcome the representatives from many countries with large Muslim populations. I want to thank you all for coming to celebrate an honored tradition of the Muslim faith and wish you a *Ramadan Mubarak*.

I want to thank those in my administration who have joined us. I want to thank the Imam for joining us today, and thank you for leading us in prayer after these short remarks. I want to thank all the ambassadors from the Organization of the Islamic Conference. I welcome other members of the diplomatic corps. And I want to thank the Muslim—American Muslim leaders who are with us today. Thanks for taking time out to celebrate this important dinner.

Ramadan is the holiest time of the Muslim year. According to Islamic teaching, this month commemorates the revelation of God's word to the Prophet Mohammed in the form of the Koran. For more than a billion Muslims, Ramadan is a time of heartfelt prayer and togetherness. It is a time of fasting and personal sacrifice. It's a time to give thanks for God's blessings through works of charity.

One Muslim leader said, "It's a national and Islamic obligation to assist one's neighbors when they are in need." The American people saw that spirit as we recovered from Hurricanes Katrina and Rita. The world sees that spirit, that compassion of Islam, through the countless acts of kindness following the recent earthquake in southeast—in South Asia.

America is fortunate to count such goodhearted men and women among our fellow citizens. We have great respect for the commitment that all Muslims make to faith, family, and education. And Americans of many backgrounds seek to learn more about the rich tradition of Islam. To promote greater understanding between our cultures, I have encouraged American families to travel abroad, to visit with Muslim families. And I have encouraged American families to host exchange students from the Muslim world. I have asked young Americans to study the language and customs of the broader Middle East. And for the first time in our Nation's history, we have added a Koran to the White House Library.

All of us gathered tonight share a conviction that America must remain a welcoming and tolerant land in which our people are free to practice any faith they choose. We reject every form of ethnic and religious discrimination. As I said in my second Inaugural Address, we cannot carry the message of freedom and the baggage of bigotry at the same time.

We also share a common hope for the future, that our children and grandchildren will grow up in a safer and more peaceful world. Delivering on that promise to future generations requires action from our generation. We must stand confidently in the cause of freedom, including the freedom of people everywhere to practice their faith in peace. We must also firmly oppose all who commit evil in God's name. I am grateful to the Muslim nations that have joined our coalition in the war on terror, including many nations that have been victims of terror themselves.

As we work together to defeat the terrorists, we must be very clear about the enemies we face. The killers who take the lives of innocent men, women, and children are followers of a violent ideology very different from the religion of Islam. These extremists distort the idea of jihad into a call for terrorist murder against anyone who does not share their radical vision, including Muslims from other traditions, who they regard as heretics.

Their strategy will fail. Many Muslim scholars have already publicly condemned terrorism, often citing Chapter 5, Verse 32 of the Koran, which states that killing an innocent human being is like killing all of humanity and saving the life of one person is like saving all of humanity. I appreciate those of you here who have joined these scholars in rejecting violent extremists. And

I believe the time has come for all responsible Islamic leaders to denounce an ideology that exploits Islam for political ends and defiles your noble faith.

I have great confidence in the future of this Nation and in the future of the Muslim world. I have been inspired by the courage of people in Afghanistan and Iraq, where Muslims are celebrating Ramadan in two of the world's newest democracies. I believe that people of every religious and ethnic background have the right and the desire to be free. And I believe that the spread of freedom and justice and tolerance in the broader Middle East will lead to the peace that we all seek.

As we celebrate this special Iftaar, we renew the ties of friendship that bind all those who trace their faith back to God's call on Abraham. We recognize the many hopeful works we have achieved together. We look forward to learning more from each other in the years ahead.

I'm so grateful that you've joined us today. I wish you a blessed Ramadan, and may God bless you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 7:01 p.m. in the State Dining Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Imam Talal Eid, Islamic Institute of Boston.

Remarks Following Discussions With President Jose Manuel Durao Barroso of the European Commission

October 18, 2005

President Bush. It's my pleasure to welcome back to the Oval Office my friend Jose Barroso. Welcome.

President Durao Barroso. Thank you.

President Bush. Thank you for taking time out of your schedule to come and visit and talk about U.S.-EU relations. I told Jose that it's very important for the people in Europe to know that America values our relationship, wants the EU to succeed, wants to work in collaboration to achieve some big objectives. One is to lay the foundation for peace by spreading democracy and freedom. And I appreciate your understanding, and thank you for working closely on that.

Secondly is to help enhance the prosperity of our respective countries as well as the world, through promoting free and fair trade. We talked about what it requires to get the Doha round moving forward. We had a good, frank discussion on that, and there's no question we share the same objective.

We talked about what we can do to work together to move forward on a lot of issues. The main thing I came away from, again, is, one, I value Jose's leadership, his advice but also how important the relationship between the EU and the United States is and that we can achieve a lot of important things when we work together.

So welcome back. Thank you for hosting me last winter. I'm proud to have you here.

President Durao Barroso. Thank you very much. It's a great pleasure for me to be, once again, here in White House with President Bush. I thank him and the First Lady for their kind and friendly hospitality.

As President Bush said, this relation is very important, most of all because we share exactly the same values of freedom, democracy, and human rights, and we complement each other in pushing forward this agenda, but also in economic terms. We have now a trade relation of more than $1 billion a day. So together, we are 40 percent of world trade. So we have a common interest in opening up markets. We

very much in the European Union are looking forward for a success of those talks. We want it to have ambitious and balanced result on agriculture but not only in agriculture. I want to underline this point, services for instance, is very important, so that our citizens can really see the benefits of globalization. And we want to work together, the United States also, engaging others, emerging markets, but also thinking about less developed countries, engaging them constructively for this—the success of these talks.

These were the main issues that I had the pleasure, once again, to discuss with President Bush in his very frank and friendly manner. I really believe we have a lot to do together, the European Union and United States.

President Bush. Thanks, Jose. Appreciate you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:50 a.m. in the Oval Office at the White House.

Remarks on Signing the Department of Homeland Security Appropriations Act, 2006

October 18, 2005

Thank you all. Please be seated. Thanks for coming. Welcome to the White House.

The most solemn duty of the President and the Congress is to protect the American people. To help meet this responsibility, we created the Department of Homeland Security. This Department united 22 Federal agencies under a single command with a clear mission, to protect the American homeland.

To protect our homeland, we tore down legal and bureaucratic walls that separated our intelligence agents from our law enforcement officers. We've disrupted terrorist planning and financing as a result of the reforms. We've used the PATRIOT Act to break up terror cells and prosecute terrorist operatives and supporters. At the same time, the Department of Homeland Security, by working with the United States Congress, has increased the number of people guarding our borders, hardened security at our airports and seaports and bridges and tunnels and water treatment facilities and nuclear plants. We've helped give those most likely to encounter terrorists, our partners in local and State government, the tools they need to do their job.

The bill I sign today supports our ongoing efforts to protect our homeland with $30.8 billion in discretionary funding for fiscal year 2006, an increase of $1.8 billion over the 2005 levels. This bill will help us identify terrorists seeking to enter our country, safeguard our cities against weapons of mass destruction, and better prepare the Federal Government to respond to catastrophic attack.

The bill also includes $7.5 billion in vital funding to address the serious problem of illegal immigration. We're going to get control of our borders. We're going to make this country safer for all our citizens.

I want to thank Secretary Mike Chertoff for the job he's doing. I want to welcome Josh Bolten, Director of OMB. He's the money man. [*Laughter*] I appreciate Ambassador John Negroponte for joining us, the Director of National Intelligence; Director Porter Goss of the CIA; Vice Admiral Scott Redd, Director of the National Counterterrorism Center.

I want to thank the Members of Congress who are up here with me: Thad Cochran of Mississippi, chairman of the Appropriations Committee; Senator Judd

Gregg, chairman of the Appropriations Subcommittee on Homeland Security; Senator Jon Kyl, chairman of the Senate Republican Policy Committee.

I want to thank the Members of the House who've joined me up here: Congressman Hal Rogers, chairman of the Appropriations Subcommittee on Homeland Security; Congressman Pete King; Congressman John Shadegg; Congressman Chet Edwards, who happens to be my Congressman; Congressman Sanford Bishop; Congressman Sheila Jackson-Lee. Thank you all for joining us. I appreciate so many Members of the House and Senate who have joined us here today. Thank you for working hard on this good bill.

I appreciate Assistant Chief Patrol Agent Rebekah Salazar, who's joined us on stage—thank you—Assistant Chief Patrol Agent Elizabeth Briones as well as Patrol Agent in Charge Felix Chavez. They all work for the U.S. Customs and Border Protection. Thanks for representing the good folks who—[*applause*]. I appreciate those first-responders who've joined us today. Thanks for bringing honor to the—[*applause*].

To defend this country, we've got to enforce our borders. When our borders are not secure, terrorists and drug dealers and criminals find it easier to come to America. This administration is going to work with Congress to make sure we do our job, and that starts with having a clear strategy. And here's how the strategy has got to be: We've got to strengthen security along our borders to stop people from entering illegally. In other words, we've got to stop people from coming here in the first place. Secondly, we must improve our ability to find and apprehend illegal immigrants who have made it across the border. If somebody is here illegally, we've got to do everything we can to find them. And thirdly, we've got to work to ensure that those who are caught are returned to their home countries as soon as possible. The bill I sign today will provide critical resources for all these efforts.

For the past 4 years, we've worked with Congress to implement the strategy. To stop illegal immigrants from coming into the country, we've increased manpower; we've upgraded technology; and we've improved the physical barriers along our border. In other words, we've worked together to implement the strategy.

Since I've been to office, we've increased funding for border security by 60 percent, and we've hired more than 1,900 new Border Patrol agents. We've deployed new technology to help our agents do their job, from unmanned aircraft to ground censors to infrared cameras. We've made better use of physical structure to help our agents do their job. We've taken steps to complete a 14-mile fence running along the San Diego border with Mexico.

Stopping people from crossing our borders illegally is only part of the strategy. The other part of our strategy is enforcing our immigration laws. Since 2001, we've increased funding for immigration enforcement by 35 percent. We've added nearly 1,000 new agents and criminal investigators to help us find and return illegal immigrants. We've targeted violent criminal gangs, whose members are here illegally.

Under a new program launched in February, our Immigration and Customs Enforcement agents have arrested nearly 1,400 illegal immigrant gang members. And this country owes them a debt of gratitude for working so hard to protect our citizens. We're going after criminal organizations and "coyotes" that traffic in human beings. These people are the worst of the worst. They prey on innocent life. They take advantage of people who want to embetter their own lives.

And we're working hard. In Arizona, we prosecuted more than 2,300 people for smuggling drugs, guns, and illegal immigrants across our borders. And I want to thank the Federal officers as well as the

folks from Arizona, both local and State, who have made this kind of work possible.

As part of our enforcement efforts, we're working to send the illegal immigrants we catch back to their home countries as soon as possible. It's one thing to catch them; it's the next thing to get them back home. To make progress—to make our progress more effective, we're going to work with—we'll continue to work with foreign governments to have their counsel officers review cases and issue travel documents more quickly—in other words, to expedite the return.

These efforts are getting results. Since 2001, we've removed several million illegal immigrants from the United States, including nearly 300,000 with criminal records. Our Border Patrol and Immigration Enforcement officers are really doing good work. Yet today we capture many more illegal immigrants than we can send home, especially non-Mexicans. And one of the biggest reasons for that is we don't have enough bed space in our detention facilities. When there's no bed space available, non-Mexicans who are caught entering our country illegally are given a slip that tells them to come back for a court appearance. And guess what? They don't come back.

And so this bill—and by the way, as a result of that—this process, the lack of beds, the lack of detention facility, we return home only 30,000 of the 160,000 non-Mexican illegal immigrants we caught coming through our Southwest border. And the system is not fair to those who are working the border. You got agents working hard to do their job, the job Americans expect; 160,000 non-Mexican illegal immigrants were caught, yet only 30,000 of them went home.

And so the bill I sign today—and I appreciate Congress's work on this matter—will help us expand our reach and effectiveness in two important ways. First, the bill provides more than $2.3 billion for the Border Patrol, so we can keep more illegal immigrants from getting into this country. In other words, we're expanding the number of agents in a rational, planned way. This bill gives $139 million to improve our technology and intelligence capabilities, including portable imaging machines and cameras and sensors and automated targeting systems that focus on high-risk travelers and goods. In other words, we've increased the number of people, but we've given them new technology so they can better do their job.

The bill also includes $82 million to improve and expand Border Patrol stations and $70 million to install and improve fencing, lighting, vehicle barriers, and roads. What I'm saying is Congress did good work in helping us build a smarter system, so we can say to the American people, "We're doing our job of securing our border."

Secondly, the bill provides $3.7 billion for immigration and customs enforcement, so we can find and return the illegal immigrants who are here. This bill will fund the hiring of 100 new immigration enforcement agents and 250 criminal investigators.

As a result of the bill I'm about to sign, we're going to add nearly 2,000 new beds to our detention facilities. That will bring the number of beds up to nearly 20,000. This will allow us to hold more non-Mexican illegal immigrants while we process them through a program we call "expedited removal." Putting more of these non-Mexican illegal immigrants through expedited removal is crucial to ending the problem of catch-and-release. As Secretary Chertoff told the Senate earlier this morning, our goal is clear, to return every single illegal entrant, with no exceptions. And this bill gets us on the way to do that.

For Mexicans who cross into America illegally, we have a different strategy. Now most of the 900,000 illegal immigrants from Mexico who are caught each year are immediately escorted back across the border. The problem is, these illegal immigrants are able to find another "coyote" or human smuggler, and they come right back in. One part of the solution is a program called

"interior repatriation," where we fly or bus Mexican illegal immigrants all the way back to their hometowns. See, many of these folks are coming from the interior of Mexico. And so the farther away from the border we send them, the more difficult it will be for them to turn around and cross right back into America. By returning Mexicans to their homes, far away from desert crossings, we're helping to save lives. These efforts are going to help us enforce our borders, and I want to thank you for your good work.

As we improve and expand our efforts to secure our borders, we must also recognize that enforcement work—that enforcement cannot work unless it is part of a larger comprehensive immigration reform program. If an employer has a job that no American is willing to take, we need to find a way to fill that demand by matching willing employers with willing workers from foreign countries on a temporary and legal basis. The best way to do that is through a temporary-worker program that gives those workers we need a legal, honest way to come into our country and to return home. I'm going to work with Members of Congress to create a program that can provide for our economy's labor needs without harming American workers, without providing amnesty, and that will improve our ability to control our borders.

You see, we got people sneaking into our country to work. They want to provide for their families. Family values do not stop at the Rio Grande River. People are coming to put food on the table. But because there is no legal way for them to do so, through a temporary-worker program, they're putting pressure on our border. It makes sense to have a rational plan that says, "You can come and work on a temporary basis, if an employer can't find an American to do the job." It makes sense for the employer. It makes sense for the worker, and it makes sense for those good people trying to enforce our border. The fewer people trying to sneak in to work means it's more likely we're going to catch smugglers—drug smugglers and terrorists and gun runners.

A critical part of any temporary-worker program is work site enforcement. To deal with employers who violate our immigration law, this bill strengthens our enforcement capabilities by adding new agents and doubling their resources. We've got to crack down on employers who flout our laws. And we will give honest employers the tools they need to spot fake documents and ensure that their workers are respecting our laws. America is a country of laws, and we're going to uphold our laws for the good of the citizens of this country.

The bill I'm about to sign funds a lot of important programs. It helps people do the job they've been called on to do, which is to protect the American people. A key component of this bill is to make sure we enforce the borders of the United States of America. And I want to thank the authors of the bill, those who have worked hard to get this bill to my desk, for putting forth a rational plan, a way to do our job.

We've got a lot of work to do in this country. There are enemies still out there who want to hurt us. But this bill is a step toward all of us, Republicans and Democrats, being able to say to the American people, "We're coming together to do the best job we can possibly do to protect this country."

Again, I want to thank the Members for being here. Thanks for your good work. May God bless you, and may God continue to bless our country.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:33 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. H.R. 2360, approved October 18, was assigned Public Law No. 109–90. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of these remarks.

Statement on Signing the Department of Homeland Security Appropriations Act, 2006

October 18, 2005

Today, I have signed into law H.R. 2360, the "Department of Homeland Security Appropriations Act, 2006." The Act provides funds to protect the United States against terrorism, assist those adversely affected by natural disasters such as hurricanes, and carry out other departmental functions such as securing our Nation's borders and enforcing our immigration laws.

The executive branch shall construe as calling solely for notification the provisions of the Act that purport to require congressional committee approval for the execution of a law. Any other construction would be inconsistent with the principles enunciated by the Supreme Court of the United States in *INS* v. *Chadha.* These provisions include: "United States Visitor and Immigrant Status Indicator Technology;" "Automation Modernization, Customs and Border Protection;" "Air and Marine Interdiction, Operations, Maintenance, and Procurement, Customs and Border Protection;" "Automation Modernization, Immigration and Customs Enforcement;" "Salaries and Expenses, United States Secret Service;" "Research, Development, Acquisition, and Operations, Science and Technology for the Domestic Nuclear Detection Office;" and sections 504, 505, 509, 511, 526, and 538.

Under the heading "Customs and Border Protection," the Act purports to require the Bureau of Customs and Border Protection to relocate its tactical checkpoints in the Tucson, Arizona, sector at least once every 7 days. Decisions on deployment and redeployment of law enforcement officers in the execution of the laws are a part of the executive power vested in the President by Article II of the Constitution. Accordingly, the executive branch shall construe the relocation provision as advisory rather than mandatory.

Section 516 of the Act purports to direct the conduct of security and suitability investigations. To the extent that section 516 relates to access to classified national security information, the executive branch shall construe this provision in a manner consistent with the President's exclusive constitutional authority, as head of the unitary executive branch and as Commander in Chief, to classify and control access to national security information and to determine whether an individual is suitable to occupy a position in the executive branch with access to such information.

To the extent that section 518 of the Act purports to allow an agent of the legislative branch to prevent implementation of the law unless the legislative agent reports to the Congress that the executive branch has met certain conditions, the executive branch shall construe such section as advisory, in accordance with the constitutional principles enumerated in the *Chadha* decision.

As is consistent with the text of the Act, the executive branch shall construe section 521 as relating to the integrity and supervision of the United States Secret Service only within the Department of Homeland Security. The executive branch therefore shall construe section 521 to neither affect the functions and supervision of personnel of the Secret Service assigned or detailed to duty outside the Department of Homeland Security, nor limit participation by the Secret Service in cooperative command and other arrangements with other governmental entities for the conduct of particular operations.

Section 527 refers to joint explanatory statements of managers accompanying conference reports on specified acts. Such statements do not satisfy the constitutional requirements of bicameral approval and

presentment to the President needed to give them the force of law.

The executive branch shall construe section 529 of the Act, relating to privacy officer reports, in a manner consistent with the President's constitutional authority to supervise the unitary executive branch.

GEORGE W. BUSH

The White House,

October 18, 2005.

NOTE: H.R. 2360, approved October 18, was assigned Public Law No. 109–90.

Remarks Following a Meeting With Secretary of Education Margaret Spellings

October 19, 2005

The President. Laura and I are proud to welcome our Secretary of Education here to the Oval Office. Secretary Spellings has just delivered what's called the Nation's Report Card, which is a sample of over 300,000 students from—in every State, as to whether or not they've got the capacity to read and write and add and subtract in the fourth and eighth grade.

This is an encouraging report—thank you for coming, Madam Secretary—because it shows there's an achievement gap in America that is closing, that minority students, particularly in fourth grade math and fourth grade reading, are beginning to catch up with their Anglo counterparts. And that's positive, and that's important. It shows that a system that measures and focuses on every child is a system that can help us and achieve a goal that we really want in America, and that is every child learning to read and no child—and add and subtract and no child being left behind.

This is an important yardstick. It's an important measuring tool. It will allow States to compare how they're doing with their neighboring States, for example. It also points up where we've got more work to do. We've got work to do in eighth grade reading. And that's why we've discussed the program, Striving Readers Program. We hope Congress funds that program to make sure that there's intense focus in the middle schools in reading and math, just like there's intense focus in the early grades in reading and math.

And so, Madam Secretary, thanks for coming. Appreciate you delivering the report. No Child Left Behind is working.

Secretary Spellings. Thank you, Mr. President.

The President. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:16 a.m. in the Oval Office at the White House.

Message to the Congress on Continuation of the National Emergency With Respect to Significant Narcotics Traffickers Centered in Colombia
October 19, 2005

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 significant narcotics traffickers centered in Colombia is to continue in effect beyond October 21, 2005. The most recent notice continuing this emergency was published in the *Federal Register* on October 20, 2004 (69 *Fed. Reg.* 61733).

The circumstances that led to the declaration on October 21, 1995, of a national emergency have not been resolved. The actions of significant narcotics traffickers centered in Colombia continue to pose an unusual and extraordinary threat to the national security, foreign policy, and economy of the United States and to cause unparalleled violence, corruption, and harm in the United States and abroad. For these reasons, I have determined that it is necessary to maintain economic pressure on significant narcotics traffickers centered in Colombia by blocking their property and interests in property that are in the United States or within the possession or control of United States persons and by depriving them of access to the U.S. market and financial system.

GEORGE W. BUSH

The White House,
October 19, 2005.

NOTE: The notice is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

The President's News Conference With President Mahmoud Abbas of the Palestinian Authority
October 20, 2005

President Bush. Thank you all. Thanks. It's my honor to welcome the democratically elected leader of the Palestinian Authority to the White House for the second time this year. We just had some good talks. Mr. President, thanks—a good, open, exchange of ideas.

President Abbas is a man devoted to peace and to his people's aspirations for a state of their own. And today the Palestinian people are closer to realizing those aspirations. It's a really interesting period of history, I think. I was just commenting to the President when we were in the Oval Office, how much things have changed in the Holy Land. After all, he got elected in January; there were successful Palestinian municipal elections; and then we witnessed the completion of Israel's disengagement from Gaza and parts of the West Bank. It's been an eventful year.

And I say it's an eventful year because the ultimate objective is there—for there to be two states, living side by side in peace, two democracies living side by side in peace. And I believe that's where we're

headed. Israel's withdrawal from Gaza and parts of West Bank was a bold decision with historic significance. President Abbas and the Palestinian Authority contributed to the success of the withdrawal in significant ways. Mr. President, thank you.

Through the active coordination and ground-level cooperation between Israeli and Palestinian security forces, the disengagement has been completed successfully and calmly. Israeli withdrawal creates new opportunities, creates responsibilities for the Palestinian people.

The way forward must begin by confronting the threat that armed gangs pose to a genuinely democratic Palestine. And those armed gangs must confront the threat that armed gangs pose to lasting peace between the Israelis and the Palestinians.

Now, Mr. President, you ran on a platform of peace. That's why the people voted for you. I strongly support your rejection of terror and your commitment to what you have called, one authority, one law, and one gun. The United States, in cooperation with the international community, has helped you achieve this through the efforts of our senior U.S. security coordinator, General Kip Ward. I appreciate your service, General Ward. Thank you for being here, and thank you for all your hard work to help the Palestinian security forces at a critical time. Job well done.

In the coming days, I'll be naming our new coordinator to build on the progress General Ward has made. This person will take on an enhanced mission to help President Abbas and the Palestinian Authority carry out their responsibility to end terror attacks, dismantle terrorist infrastructure, maintain law and order, and one day, provide security for their own state.

The way forward must include rebuilding the Palestinian economy. This goal has the support of the Quartet, the United States, the United Nations, the European Union, and Russia. Quartet Special Envoy Jim Wolfensohn is coordinating a broad effort to generate economic and financial support from the international community for the Palestinian Authority, and he's doing a good job. I'm going to continue to consult with our Quartet partners to ask Jim to extend his mission until next spring.

It's important that we make quick progress on the issues that Jim has identified as most critical for the Palestinian economy, including opening the Rafah crossing, connecting the West Bank and Gaza, improving the ability of Palestinians to travel in the West Bank, and beginning work on the Gaza seaport. These are all practical steps that will help the Palestinian economy grow and flourish. I believe that Arab States have a particular responsibility to help the Palestinians build a strong and prosperous economy, and I urge them to create an environment in the region that strengthens the possibility of peace.

The way forward must continue to include democratic elections. The upcoming elections for the Palestinian Legislative Council offer an opportunity to open the door to the next generation of Palestinian leaders. They'll be responsible for building a peaceful and hopeful future for their country.

In the short term, the Palestinian Authority must earn the confidence of its people by holding elections and having a functioning government that delivers economic opportunity. The Palestinian Authority must also earn the confidence of its neighbors by rejecting and fighting terrorism.

As I have stated in the past, achieving peace demands action from all parties. Israel must continue to work with Palestinian leaders to help improve the daily lives of Palestinians. At the same time, Israel should not undertake any activity that contravenes its roadmap obligations or prejudices the final status negotiations with regard to Gaza, the West Bank, and Jerusalem. This means that Israel must remove unauthorized posts and stop settlement expansion. It also means that the barrier now being built to protect Israelis from terrorist attacks must be a security barrier, rather

than a political barrier. Israeli leaders must take into account the impact this security barrier has on Palestinians not engaged in terrorist activities.

This is a time of great possibility in the Middle East. And the people of the region are counting on their leaders to seize the opportunities for peace and progress. This work isn't going to be easy, but the path forward is clear. I want to thank President Abbas for his hard work. I appreciate your service, Mr. President. I assured him that the United States will use our influence to help realize a shared vision of two democratic states, Israel and Palestine, living side by side in peace and security.

Welcome.

President Abbas. Thank you. Mr. President, I would like to thank you for your warm welcome, and I would like to express my satisfaction with the talks that I conducted with you and your senior aides.

You have emphasized, Mr. President, from this place, about 5 months ago, the basic counters for the U.S. position regarding the various aspects of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict. This position, which you have reiterated today, contributes fundamentally to advance the chances of reviving and resuming the peace process in the region.

In the last few months, the dismantling of settlements and the withdrawal of Israeli forces from the Gaza Strip was concluded. The Palestinian Authority have worked very hard with all its energy in order to make sure that this will happen without any incident, in order to have this as a window of an opportunity that will help us to move faster toward achieving additional steps on the way toward realizing just peace based on your vision and on international resolutions.

This window, Mr. President, must remain open. And this opportunity must be strengthened through resolving all the outstanding issues—as you have mentioned, the Gaza crossing point and the establishment of a permanent link between Gaza and West Bank. At the same time, we must immediately start implementing what the roadmap and the Sharm el-Sheikh agreements regarding the cessation of settlement activities and construction of the wall in the West Bank, particularly in Jerusalem, in addition to withdrawal of the Israeli forces to positions prior to September 28, 2000.

With the removal of the roadblocks, which, unfortunately, turned the lives of Palestinians into hardship, suffering, humiliation, and also in a very important sensitive issue, which is the release of prisoners of freedom from Israeli jails. The implementation of these requirements, Mr. President, represents urging the talks on permanent status issues regarding Jerusalem, refugees, settlements, borders, in order to reach, at the end, peace, which would allow for the establishment of an independent, democratic Palestinian state, on all the territories occupied in 1967. That state that would live in a good, neighborly relationship, in peace with the State of Israel.

Mr. President, there is approximately 100 days between us and the elections for our legislative council, where the Palestinian people would go to the ballot box to elect for the first time since their—for the first time in 10 years—their representatives. This for us represents a very important landmark. On one hand, it crowns a whole year since I assumed office, and also, these elections would represent a renewal process, and a rebuilding process of our political process.

Also, these elections will consolidate and reinforce the slogan I ran on during my Presidential election, which emphasized clearly the one authority, the one law, the one legal, legitimate law, and political pluralism. The new legislative council would be mandated by the people to legislate and issue these slogans and make them a reality.

Once again, we repeat our pride of our democratic experience that's been undertaken by the Palestinian people, and we

repeat and we say that the democracy can lose a lot of its momentum in the absence of freedom and with the continuation of occupation.

Mr. President, our discussions today have allowed us to inform you of what the Palestinian National Authority is doing and what we are doing in terms of various policies in various spheres. We have worked and we will continue to work to continue to ensure the calm and maintain it. We are also intensifying our work in the field of security. We have taken active steps in imposing the rule of law and public order and ban armed demonstrations.

Our measures are continuing to reinforce the judiciary branch, as well as the administrative reform. We have said, and we did during the last week start launching a series of economic projects in the infrastructure and in health and education and agriculture in both Gaza and the West Bank.

And here I would like to salute the United States for its contribution and also the help that came from a variety of Arab countries and countries around the world. And we hope that all these projects will be activated by the donors' countries in order to increase the number of projects that our people are in need of.

Our discussion of the overall situation in the region has afforded us the opportunity to point out what we reaffirmed repeatedly through the past few weeks, on behalf of the Palestine Liberation Organization: We are determined not to interfere in domestic Lebanese affairs. We reiterate that the Palestinian refugees in Lebanon are subject to the authority and the laws of Lebanon as temporary guests awaiting the resolution of the refugee problem in the accordance with the international resolutions.

Mr. President, we reaffirm again here today our commitment to peace and negotiated settlement. We expect that our people's quest in this direction will be supported. The time has come to put an end to the Palestinian-Israeli conflict. The time has come that the Palestinian people will attain their freedom and independence. The time has come to move quickly towards the resumption of permanent status negotiations.

Peace requires a departure from the policies of occupation and the adoption of the principle of freedom. Peace requires departure from the policies of settlements construction, the collective punishment, unilateral acts that undermine your vision toward two states and replace that with progress towards negotiations. Peace and security cannot be guaranteed by the construction of walls, by the erection of checkpoints, and the confiscation of land but rather by the recognition of rights.

Peace cannot be attained by the enforcement of discriminatory road policies and by the policies of imposition and creation of facts on the ground but rather through belief in the principles of partnership, parity, and mutual respect.

We are presenting, based on wide public support, our positions that call upon the Israeli side to join us in a real partnership for making peace. We are calling for a Palestinian-Israeli partnership for the sake of creating a better future and for the entire region that can end decades from wars, occupation, and open the doors wide open. We were promised peace, independence, and freedom, and we hope that all of this will be achieved.

Mr. President, once again, I thank you, and reaffirm to you, as we did in our last visit, we are leaving Washington more sure and—more confidence of the possibility of reviving and resuming the peace process and more determined to forge ahead along with the path of peace, democracy, and freedom. Thank you, Mr. President.

President Bush. We'll take two questions a side. Terry [Terence Hunt, Associated Press].

President's Agenda

Q. Thank you. Mr. President, there are a lot of distractions for your White House, the CIA leak investigation, a conservative

uproar and congressional criticism over the Harriet Miers nomination, and even investigations of top Republican leaders in Congress. How preoccupied is the White House by these problems, and how are you dealing with them?

President Bush. Well, I've just finished a very constructive dialog with the President of the Palestinian Authority, talking about how to achieve peace.

And I've got a job to do. Part of my job is to work with others to fashion a world that will be peaceful for future generations. And I've got a job to do to make sure this economy continues to grow. I've got a job to make sure that there is a plausible reconstruction plan for cities affected by Katrina. I've got a job to make sure this hurricane headed toward Florida is—the Federal response is prepared for it.

So, to answer your question, there's some background noise here, a lot of chatter, a lot of speculation and opining. But the American people expect me to do my job, and I'm going to.

Want to call on somebody, Mr. President. Oops. We've better go one at a time here.

Q. President Bush——

President Bush. Who do you work for?

Building Trust in the Middle East

Q. AFP [Agence France Presse]. The roadmap that your administration backs calls for the creation of a Palestinian state in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank.

President Bush. Yes.

Q. Yet, the Israelis' settlement activities, despite your repeated calls, included today, still continue in the West Bank. What is your administration planning to do to get Israel to put an end to those activities?

And then, President Abbas——

[*At this point, the reporter continued his question in Arabic, and his remarks were translated by an interpreter as follows.*]

——what are the practical steps that they want Bush—President Bush to take in order to establish the Palestinian state before the end of his term?

President Bush. As I said in my comments, and—that we expect all parties to adhere to the roadmap. And we are holding people to account on the pledges that both the Palestinians and the Israelis have made on the roadmap. And we do so publicly, and we do so privately.

It's—a lot of these issues that have been, you know, very difficult for a long period of time become easier to resolve as there's more trust between the parties. And trust becomes a permanent part of the political process as action on the ground takes place. The Gaza withdrawal is a magnificent opportunity to help develop trust. It's an opportunity to develop trust between the Palestinians and the Israelis. And after all, the world watched strong cooperation between two willing governments to help the disengagement of Gaza, which is a, you know—right now, I guess, we take it all for granted.

You look back—I think prior to the disengagement, there was a lot of consternation, a lot of concern. I suspect some of you might have even reported that, you know, "Better watch out. This disengagement could end up being a very difficult period." And yet thanks to the President's leadership and Prime Minister Sharon's leadership, the disengagement worked, which established trust.

The President has got an—a job, and that's to establish trust with the Palestinian people. He is a man who said, "I'm running on a peace platform," and therefore, he has talked to us about using security forces to make sure that armed gangs don't disrupt the democratic process. And our job is to help him do that. And so to answer your question, yes, we hold people to account for their promises made on the roadmap. And many of those promises will be easier to keep for all parties as there's

progress on the ground. And we have seen remarkable progress during the past year.

And there's—and the progress isn't over this year. There will be elections. This is a very hopeful period. I'm very upbeat about being able to achieve this vision. I understand it's hard. Things don't happen overnight. Old feuds aren't settled immediately, and it takes awhile.

The key thing, as far as I'm concerned, is that there are partners in peace. Prime Minister Sharon wants there to be peace. President Abbas wants there to be peace. And both men are showing strong leadership toward achieving that objective, and that's why I'm confident. I'm a heck of a lot more confident today than when—I was when I first came into office. I know it's nearly 5 years ago, and that's an eternity for some, but there has been remarkable progress in this part of the world. And we'll continue to work with the parties to achieve this important objective, two democratic states living side by side in peace.

President Abbas. Thank you. The truth is, our answer to that question, we have to change the question: What are we supposed to do—as Palestinians and Israelis—to do.

First of all, we have to work. We have to do our part. We have to think as partners. So many years passed by, more than 4 years we did not have any dialog. We did not have any talks. And now we have confidence. We need to rebuild and build on that confidence and on the relationship.

And on our side, we are extending our hand to be a true partners in the peace process, and we hope that the Israeli side also will do the same, so we can do our parts. And what we ask President Bush to do is what he mentioned during his remarks, the roadmap and the achievement and the realization of his vision. The roadmap talks about settlements, about the barrier, all these issues that will facilitate the road to achieving true peace, and will facilitate building the confidence between the two peoples, the Israelis and the Palestinians.

President Bush. Steve [Steve Holland, Reuters].

Associate Justice-Designate Harriet E. Miers

Q. Thanks very much, sir. Senator Specter called the rollout of the Miers nomination chaotic. Is that a fair criticism? Are you satisfied with the way the nomination has been handled? Would you be willing to release any more documents about her if it would help?

President Bush. First of all, it's an unusual nomination because she's never been a judge. And so, generally, people are used to looking at different court opinions and how one ruled on this case or how one ruled on that case. That's not the case with Harriet.

I picked Harriet for a lot of reasons. One reason was because she had never been a judge. I thought it made a lot of sense to bring a fresh outlook of somebody who has actually been a very successful attorney and not only a successful attorney but been a pioneer for women lawyers in Texas. I remind you that she was one of the top 50 women lawyers in the United States; she's consistently ranked that way. And so this is a little different process than the norm. I understand that.

Secondly, the questionnaire that she filled out is an important questionnaire, and obviously they will address the questions that the Senators have in the questionnaire—or as a result of the answers to the questions in the questionnaire. But one thing the questionnaire does show, if people look at it carefully, is Harriet's judicial philosophy. And it's the main reason I picked her to serve on the bench, if confirmed, and that is that she is not going to legislate from the bench. She will strictly interpret the Constitution.

I said that when I ran for President—I said, "If you elect me, I will name people that will have that judicial philosophy." I've now had two chances, one, John Roberts,

and now Harriet Miers. And they share the same judicial philosophy. That's what the questionnaire says.

And so Harriet will answer all the questions asked, and—but out of this will come a clear picture of a competent, strong, capable woman who shares the same judicial philosophy that I share.

Do you want to call on somebody, Mr. President?

Situation in the Middle East

Q. Thank you, President Abbas. As President Bush referred and said, that the only way to achieve progress and the peace road is combating armed gangs. And you are facing difficulties in doing this. Are you going to seek help and support from American President George Bush, to help you in disarming the resistance movements?

And President, you say you wanted to see the Palestinian state made before the end of your Presidency. Are you still hoping to see something like that? This is number one. Number two, don't you think the time has come for—to talk about timetables to get the two parties to the issues of final status negotiations?

President Abbas. Regarding your questions, I am saying that we are truly in need of help from the United States in a variety of issues, economic issues and financial issues and also security support. And the reason is having General Ward among us, a man who has done a magnificent job, and we appreciate him and appreciate his work very much.

Regarding the—our internal issues, we are following a policy. I believe it is a successful policy. When we started and we asked everyone to accept the *hudna* or the calming, all the organizations that are recognized accepted that. Then we moved into another phase, and that is the phase of banning all public demonstrations with firearms. All groups accepted that.

Now, all groups are underway to the electoral process, so all groups will become a part of the political Palestinian fabric. I believe this will create a new phase in the life of Palestinian people. It's a phase of democracy and pluralism in full fledge in order to be a solid base for peace in the region.

President Bush. I believe that two democratic states living side by side in peace is possible. I can't tell you when it's going to happen. It's happening. And the reason I can't is because there will be moments of progress, and there will be moments of setback. The key is to keep moving forward, is to have partners in peace to move forward.

But one thing that will not happen is that we will try—the United States will try to conform and force parties to make decisions based upon the political schedule in America. That doesn't make any sense. What matters is the decisions made by the Palestinians and the Israelis and the confidence earned as we move forward.

And so you said, "I would like to see two states before I get out of office." Not true. I'd like to see two states. And if it happens before I get out of office, I'll be there to witness the ceremony. And if it hadn't—if it doesn't, we will work hard to lay that foundation so that the process becomes irreversible.

Timetables are, you know, interesting—an interesting thing. Everybody wants a timetable, it seems like, on different issues. And these are very complicated matters where years of conflict and years of mistrust are being resolved by some basic truths. And one of the basic truths is free societies are peaceful societies. And so we can look forward to working with a partner in peace, a person who said, "Vote for me. I'm for peace," and a man who declares his understanding that the Palestinian people, the long-suffering Palestinian people, will be well served by a democracy, a truly functioning democracy.

And so, Mr. President, we're glad you're back. I want to thank you for your strong leadership, and we wish you all the very best. Thank you, sir. Appreciate you.

NOTE: The President's news conference began at 10:57 a.m. in the Rose Garden at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Lt. Gen. William E. "Kip" Ward, USA, Senior U.S. Security Coordinator, Department of State; James D. Wolfensohn, Quartet Special Envoy for Gaza Disengagement; and Prime Minister Ariel Sharon of Israel. President Abbas and some reporters spoke in Arabic, and their remarks were translated by an interpreter.

Statement on House of Representatives Passage of Protection of Lawful Commerce in Arms Legislation
October 20, 2005

I commend the House for passing the "Protection of Lawful Commerce in Arms Act." Our laws should punish criminals who use guns to commit crimes, not law-abiding manufacturers of lawful products. This legislation will further our efforts to stem frivolous lawsuits, which cause a logjam in America's courts, harm America's small businesses, and benefit a handful of lawyers at the expense of victims and consumers. I look forward to signing this legislation into law.

NOTE: The statement referred to S. 397.

Remarks at the Ribbon-Cutting Ceremony for the Air Force One Pavilion in Simi Valley, California
October 21, 2005

Thank you all. Fred, you forgot to say, Air Force One brought me out here to California—[*laughter*]—and Laura and I are glad we came. Thanks for the warm welcome. We're great fans of Nancy Reagan. We admire her strength. We admire the love she has for her husband, and we're grateful for your friendship. Thank you, Mrs. Reagan. And I appreciate the invitation to come back to the Ronald Reagan Presidential Library, and I'm proud to stand in this magnificent pavilion that is now home to a celebrated symbol of democracy and freedom.

You know, across this Nation, Americans can visit many great memorials to the cause of liberty, from a statue in a busy harbor whose arm carries high the flame of freedom, to a quiet field in Arlington filled with rows of white tombstones, to a mountainside in the heartland carved with the images of America's great leaders. Each evokes a sense of awe and wonder. But none can soar at more than 500 miles an hour—[*laughter*]—carrying freedom's message across oceans and continents.

It was President Reagan's dream to share Air Force One with the American people by bringing this plane to his Presidential library. Now, as this pavilion opens, Americans will have the chance to experience firsthand the majesty and the power of this incredible aircraft. I want to thank you all for making this possible. This is an important contribution to the history of America.

I appreciate Fred Ryan, the chairman of the Board of Trustees, and I want to thank all the trustees who are here. I thank Duke Blackwood, the executive director. I appreciate Rob Zucca. He happens to be the

Air Force One project specialist, the guy who got the work done.

Traveling with me today is Colonel Mark Tillman. Fred mentioned the flight into Baghdad. He was the pilot flying me into Baghdad. He's—I've always found it's a good thing to praise your pilot. [*Laughter*]

I appreciate former Governor and Senator Pete Wilson being here—it's good to see you and Gayle; thanks for coming—former Attorney General Ed Meese and Ursula; Members of the United States Congress, some of whom—all of whom I'm about to mention jumped on Air Force One yesterday to fly from Washington to Los Angeles. They've heard it's quite comfortable. [*Laughter*] Elton Gallegly and his wife, Janice—Elton is the Congressman from this district. David Dreier and Dana Rohrabacher, thank you all for coming.

I know Mayor Paul Miller is with us. Mr. Mayor, thanks for being here. We appreciate you coming. Only advice I have is, fill the potholes. [*Laughter*]

We're proud that the Archivist of the United States, Allen Weinstein, is with us, as well as Acting Secretary of the Air Force Pete Geren.

But most of all, thanks for inviting Laura and me to be here.

There is no single aircraft called Air Force One. That call sign belongs to any Air Force plane when the Commander in Chief is on board. And this particular plane, Tail Number 27000, wore the name of Air Force One 445 times, over 28 years, in service to America's—7 American Presidents, starting with Richard Nixon and ending with me.

Of all the Presidents that Tail Number 27000 served, none used her more than President Ronald Reagan. It was 25 years ago this November that the American people sent Ronald Reagan to the White House for his first of two terms. Mrs. Reagan recalls their first time onboard together, when this plane carried them from California to Washington, DC, for the 1981 Inaugural. As the President-elect attended to paperwork, Mrs. Reagan says she was busy writing letters to friends on Air Force One stationery—[*laughter*]—that said this: "Look at me. I'm flying on Air Force One." [*Laughter*]

In all the flights that followed, Nancy was always on the President's mind. Aides recall that whenever he traveled alone, President Reagan would bow his head in silence before each takeoff. When asked why he did so, the President replied that he was asking the Lord to take care of Nancy should something happen to him.

During his 8 years in office, this plane carried our 40th President on 211 missions, logging more than 630,000 miles in the air. The plane brought President Reagan to London, where he declared to the world that freedom and democracy would leave communism "on the ash heap of history." This plane brought President Reagan to Berlin, where he challenged General Secretary Gorbachev to "tear down this wall." And this plane brought President Reagan to Moscow, where he stood beneath a giant bust of Lenin and told the students at Moscow State University that the future belongs to freedom.

No matter how many hours he spent in the air, President Reagan never lost his sense of humor. One of his favorite pastimes on board Air Force One was prowling the staff cabin with a White House photographer in tow looking for somebody who was asleep. [*Laughter*] He would pose next to the unknown victim and then send him a signed picture when they got home. [*Laughter*] One day, Secretary of State George Schultz received a photo of himself asleep with his mouth wide open—[*laughter*]—as the President waved his arms in mock desperation. The inscription read, "George, wake up. The Soviets are coming." [*Laughter*]

The President and Mrs. Reagan flew this plane together for the last time on January the 20th, 1989, when it brought them back home to California. Now, 16 years later, this plane has found a home beneath the

Pacific sky, alongside the President she so ably served.

It's appropriate that this symbol of American strength and resilience and optimism has come to rest at the library that bears Ronald Reagan's name. After all, it was President Reagan who always reminded us that when we set our eyes on the horizon, every day is "morning in America." As Nancy Reagan has said, "The Reagan Library is a place the sun will never set on the principles that Ronnie believed in so deeply."

Ronald Reagan's principles started with an abiding belief in the power and in the appeal of liberty. He believed that freedom is the right of every man, woman, and child on Earth. He recognized that freedom was opposed by dangerous enemies, and he understood that America has always prevailed by standing firmly on principles and never backing down in the face of evil.

At the beginning of his Presidency, Ronald Reagan declared that the years ahead would be great ones "for the cause of freedom and the spread of civilization." He dismissed communism as "a bizarre chapter in human history whose last pages were being written." For 8 years he acted on that conviction, and shortly after he left office, the Berlin Wall came down; the "Evil Empire" collapsed; and the cause of liberty prevailed in the cold war.

The pavilion that we open today includes a cold war gallery where a new generation will learn about the great victory for freedom that President Reagan's leadership helped secure. They'll see how President Reagan rallied the world's democracies to defend liberty against the totalitarian aspirations of Soviet communism. They'll see how his strategy and vision secured a free and peaceful Europe. They will learn that the key to victory lay in our resolve to stay in the fight until the fight was won.

As President Reagan put it in his Westminster address, "While our military strength is a prerequisite to peace, the ultimate determinant in the struggle will be not bombs and rockets but a test of will and ideas, a trial of spiritual resolve, the values we hold, the beliefs we cherish, to which we are dedicated."

Because of Ronald Reagan's leadership, America prevailed in the 20th century's great struggle of wills. And now in this new century, our freedom is once again being tested by determined enemies. The terrorists who attacked us on September the 11th, 2001, are followers of a radical and violent ideology. They exploit the religion of Islam to serve a violent political vision, the establishment of a totalitarian empire that denies all political and religious freedom. These extremists distort the idea of jihad into a call for terrorist murder against Christians and Jews and Hindus and against Muslims from other traditions, who they regard as heretics.

Like the ideology of communism, our new enemy is elitist, led by a self-appointed vanguard of Islamic militants that presume to speak for the Muslim masses. Like the ideology of communism, our new enemy teaches that the innocent can be murdered to serve a political vision. Like the ideology of communism, our new enemy pursues totalitarian aims. Like the ideology of communism, our new enemy is dismissive of free peoples, claiming that men and women who live in liberty are weak and decadent. And like the ideology of communism, Islamic radicalism is doomed to fail.

It will fail because it undermines the freedom and creativity that makes human progress possible and human societies successful. The only thing modern about our enemy's vision is the weapons they want to use against us. The rest of their grim vision is defined by a warped image of the past, a declaration of war on the idea of progress itself. And whatever lies ahead in the war against this ideology, the outcome is not in doubt: Those who despise freedom and progress have condemned themselves to isolation, decline, and collapse. Because free peoples believe in the future, free peoples will own the future.

We didn't ask for this global struggle, but we are answering history's call with confidence and a comprehensive strategy. We're working to prevent the attacks of terrorist networks before they occur. We're determined to deny weapons of mass destruction to outlaw regimes and to their terrorist allies who would use them without hesitation. We're depriving radical groups of support and sanctuary from outlaw regimes. We're stopping the militants from gaining control of any nation which they would use as a home base and a launching pad for terror. And we're draining the militants of future recruits by replacing hatred and resentment with democracy and hope and freedom across the broader Middle East.

We will prevail in the war on terror, because this generation is determined to meet the threats of our time. We understand our duty. We understand our responsibility to the American people. There will be tough moments ahead on this path to victory. Yet, we have confidence in our cause because we have seen America face down brutal enemies before. We have confidence in our cause because we have seen the power of freedom to overcome the dark ideologies of tyranny and terror. And we have confidence in our cause because we believe, as President Ronald Reagan did, that freedom is "one of the deepest and noblest aspirations of the human spirit."

Thank you all for having us. May God bless Ronald Reagan, and may God continue to bless the United States of America.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:07 a.m. at the Ronald Reagan Presidential Library. In his remarks, he referred to Robert Zucca, exhibits specialist, Ronald Reagan Presidential Library, National Archives and Records Administration; Gayle Wilson, wife of former Gov. Pete Wilson of California; Ursula Meese, wife of former Attorney General Edwin Meese III; and Mayor Paul Miller of Simi Valley, CA.

Remarks to Reporters in Simi Valley
October 21, 2005

Mehlis Report

Today the United Nations issued what is called the Mehlis Report. It's a report into the death of Prime Minister Hariri of Lebanon, and the report is deeply disturbing. The report suggests that it is—strongly suggests that the politically motivated assassination could not have taken place without Syrian involvement.

I called Secretary Rice this morning and instructed her to call upon the United Nations to convene a session as quickly as possible to deal with this very serious matter. We have made it clear that the position of the United States is that there be no foreign involvement in Lebanon. The United Nations made that clear through Resolution 1559. And today a serious report came out that requires the world to look at it very carefully and respond accordingly.

Thank you all very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:50 a.m. at the Ronald Reagan Presidential Library. In his remarks, he referred to Detlev Mehlis, head, United Nations International Independent Investigation Commission into the assassination of former Prime Minister Hariri. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

The President's Radio Address
October 22, 2005

Good morning. This week I signed into law a bill that supports our ongoing efforts to defend our homeland.

To defend this country, we have to enforce our borders. When our borders are not secure, terrorists, drug dealers, and criminals find it easier to sneak into America. My administration has a clear strategy for dealing with this problem: We want to stop people from crossing into America illegally and to quickly return the illegal immigrants we catch back to their home countries.

For the past 4 years, we've been implementing this strategy. To stop illegal immigrants from coming across our borders, we've added manpower, upgraded our technology, and taken the final steps necessary to complete a 14-mile barrier running along the San Diego border with Mexico.

To enforce our immigration laws within our borders, we've hired more immigration agents, gone after criminal gangs, and targeted smugglers and *coyotes* who traffic in human beings. We are getting results: Since 2001, we have removed more than 4.8 million illegal immigrants from the United States, including more than 300,000 with criminal records.

Our border patrol and immigration agents are doing a fine job, but we still have a problem. Too many illegal immigrants are coming in, and we're capturing many more non-Mexican illegal immigrants than we can send home. And one of the biggest reasons we cannot send them back is that we lack space in our detention facilities to hold them until they are removed. When there's no bed available, non-Mexicans who are caught entering our country illegally are given a slip that tells them to come back for a court appearance. Most never show up, and then they disappear back into the shadows of our communities. This is called "catch-and-release," and it is unacceptable.

The bill I signed includes $7.5 billion that will help us address the problem of illegal immigration in two important ways. First, it provides more than $2.3 billion for the Border Patrol so we can keep more illegal immigrants from getting into the country in the first place. These funds will help us hire a thousand new border patrol agents, improve our technology and intelligence, expand and improve Border Patrol stations, and install and improve fencing, lighting, vehicle barriers, and roads along our border areas. I appreciate the help Congress has given us for our common goal of creating more secure borders.

Second, this bill also provides $3.7 billion for Immigration and Customs Enforcement so we can find and return the illegal immigrants who are entering our country. With these funds, we can expand the holding capacity of our detention facilities by 10 percent. This will allow us to hold more non-Mexican illegal immigrants while we process them through a program we call "expedited removal." This will make the process faster and more efficient. Putting more non-Mexican illegal immigrants through expedited removal is crucial to sending back people who have come here illegally. As Secretary Chertoff told the Senate this week, our goal is to return every single illegal entrant, with no exceptions. And this bill puts us on the path to do that.

For Mexicans who cross into America illegally, we have a different plan but the same goal. Now, most of the 900,000 illegal immigrants from Mexico who are caught each year are immediately escorted back across the border. The problem is that these illegal immigrants are able to connect with another smuggler or "coyote" and come right back in. So one part of the

solution is a program called "interior repatriation" where we fly or bus these illegal immigrants all the way back to their hometowns in the interior of Mexico. By returning illegal Mexican immigrants to their homes, far away from desert crossings, we're saving lives and making it more difficult for them to turn right around and cross back into America.

As we improve and expand our efforts to secure our borders, we must also recognize that enforcement cannot work unless it's part of a comprehensive immigration reform that includes a temporary-worker program. If an employer has a job that no American is willing to take, we need to find a way to fill that demand by matching willing employers with willing workers from foreign countries on a temporary and legal basis. I'll work with Members of Congress to create a program that will provide for our economy's labor needs without harming American workers and without granting amnesty, and that will relieve pressure on our borders.

A critical part of any temporary-worker program is ensuring that our immigration laws are enforced at work sites. America is a country of laws. We must not allow dishonest employers to flout those laws. So we've doubled the resources for work site enforcement since 2004.

We have much more work ahead of us. But the Homeland Security bill I signed this week provides vital support for our efforts to deal with the problem of illegal immigration and make all Americans safer and more secure.

Thank you for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 12:20 p.m. on October 21 in Los Angeles, CA, for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on October 22. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on October 21 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 a Cabinet Meeting and an Exchange With Reporters
October 24, 2005

The President. Thank the members of my Cabinet for being here. We've just had a discussion about a variety of subjects. These men and women are showing extraordinary leadership to the American people, and I want to thank you for your continued service.

Secretary Chertoff briefed me and briefed the Cabinet about Hurricane Wilma. I also discussed Wilma with FEMA Director Paulison as well as the Governor of Florida, the State of Florida, Jeb Bush.

I signed a major disaster declaration today. We have prepositioned food, medicine, communications equipment, urban search and rescue teams. We will work closely with local and State authorities to respond to this hurricane.

I urge local citizens to listen to the local authorities about returning back to your homes. Those folks are on the ground. They know what they're talking about, and it's important that you pay attention to the messages coming out of people there to help you in Florida. We all ask for God's blessings on those who are in harm's way.

Secondly, we discussed responses to Katrina and Rita. We have a duty in the Federal Government to work with State and local authorities to help the citizens in Mississippi and Louisiana and Alabama and Texas. There's more help to be done, and we need to do so in a fiscally sound

way. We can meet our obligations if we set priorities. We can meet our obligations if we in Washington show the courage to not fund programs that aren't working. I look forward to working with Congress to make sure that the taxpayers understand that we can balance compassion with fiscal sanity and fiscal responsibility.

So I want to thank—again, thank the members of the Cabinet. I'll be glad to answer a couple of questions.

Nedra [Nedra Pickler, Associated Press].

CIA Employee's Identity Disclosure Investigation

Q. Thank you, Mr. President. You said several weeks ago that Special Counsel Peter Fitzgerald was handling the CIA leak investigation in a very dignified way. Yet some of your Republican supporters have recently suggested he may be an overzealous prosecutor or one obsessing over legal technicalities. Have you revised your thinking on this issue?

The President. Nedra, I also said—this may be the fourth time I've been asked about this, which I appreciate; you're doing your job—I'm not going to comment about it. This is a very serious investigation, and I haven't changed my mind about whether or not I'm going to comment on it publicly.

Fine-looking shades you got there.

Q. Thanks, Mr. President. Bono style. [*Laughter*]

The President. Wait a minute. You don't need to be endorsing any products here in the Cabinet—[*laughter*].

Associate Justice-Designate Harriet E. Miers

Q. Mr. President, as a newspaper reported on Saturday, is the White House working on a contingency plan for the withdrawal of Harriet Miers's nomination?

The President. Harriet Miers is an extraordinary woman. She was a legal pioneer in Texas. She was ranked one of the top 50 women lawyers in the United States on a consistent basis. She is—look, I understand that people want to know more about her, and that's the way the process should work.

Recently, requests, however, have been made by Democrats and Republicans about paperwork and—out of this White House that would make it impossible for me and other Presidents to be able to make sound decisions. In other words, they've asked for paperwork about the decisionmaking process, what her recommendations were, and that would breach very important confidentiality. And it's a redline I'm not willing to cross. People can learn about Harriet Miers through hearings, but we are not going to destroy this business about people being able to walk into the Oval Office and say, "Mr. President, here's my advice to you. Here's what I think is important." And that's not only important for this President; it's important for future Presidents.

Harriet Miers is a fine person, and I expect her to have a good, fair hearing on Capitol Hill.

Thank you all for coming.

Nomination for Federal Reserve Board Chairman

Q. [*Inaudible*]—on a Federal Reserve Chairman, Mr. President?

The President. Be making an announcement soon.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:45 a.m. in the Cabinet Room at the White House. A reporter referred to Patrick J. Fitzgerald, U.S. Attorney for the Northern District of Illinois, and Department of Justice CIA leak investigation Special Prosecutor; and musician and activist Bono. A portion of these remarks could not be verified because the tape was incomplete.

Remarks Announcing the Nomination of Ben S. Bernanke To Be Chairman of the Federal Reserve

October 24, 2005

The President. Good afternoon. One of a President's most important appointments is Chairman of the Federal Reserve. In our economy, the Fed is the independent body responsible for setting monetary policy, for overseeing the integrity of our banking system, for containing the risk that can arise in financial markets, and for ensuring a functioning payment system. Across the world, the Fed is the symbol of the integrity and the reliability of our financial system, and the decisions of the Fed affects the lives and livelihoods of all Americans.

To lead this institution, a Chairman must be a person of impeccable credentials, sound policy judgment, and character. Today I'm honored to announce that I'm nominating Ben Bernanke to be the next Chairman of the Federal Reserve.

Over the course of a career marked by great accomplishment, Ben has done pathbreaking work in the field of monetary policy, taught advanced economics at some of our top universities, and served with distinction on the Fed's Board of Governors. He's earned a reputation for intellectual rigor and integrity. He commands deep respect in the global financial community, and he'll be an outstanding Chairman of the Federal Reserve.

Ben will replace a legend, Alan Greenspan, who will retire when his current term runs out at the end of January. For nearly two decades, Chairman Greenspan has shepherded our economy through its highs and its lows. Under a steady chairmanship, the United States economy has come through a stock market crash, financial crises from Mexico to Asia, two recessions, corporate scandals, and shocks ranging from devastating natural disasters to a terrorist attack in the heart of America's financial center.

Through all these challenges, Chairman Greenspan's prudent judgment and wise policies have kept inflation low. He's played a major role in America's strong economic growth. He has dominated his age like no central banker in history. He has contributed to a better life for all Americans, and I thank him for his service.

Ben Bernanke is the right man to build on the record Alan Greenspan has established. Ben graduated from Harvard with top honors, earned a doctorate in economics from Massachusetts Institute of Technology. He's built a record of excellence as both an academic and policymaker. He is the author of several scholarly books and is one of the most cited economists in the world. As Fed Governor, Ben advocated greater transparency in communication with the public and markets. His speeches were widely admired for their keen insight and clear, simple language.

Ben's career has also been distinguished by leadership. He was chairman of Princeton's economics department, founding director of Princeton's Bendheim Center for Finance, and a founding editor of the International Journal of Central Banking. Since June, he has served as Chairman of the Council of Economic Advisers.

Ben is also a kind and decent man who is held in high regard by all those who've worked with him. He has the support of a strong and loving family. I'm pleased to see that Ben's wife, Anna, and his two children, Alyssa and Joel, are with us today.

I want to thank Ben for his willingness to serve in a position so important for world markets and so vital to the well being of the American people. I urge the Senate to act promptly to confirm Ben Bernanke as the 14th Chairman of the Federal Reserve.

Ben, thanks for serving.

[*At this point, Chairman-designate Bernanke made brief remarks.*]

The President. Congratulations, sir. Thank you, Ben.

Chairman-designate Bernanke. Thank you.

The President. Mr. Chairman, thank you for being here. I appreciate you.

Chairman Alan Greenspan. Thank you.

The President. Thank you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1 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 Chairman-designate Bernanke.

Interview With Al Arabiya
October 24, 2005

Mehlis Report

Q. Mr. President, thank you very much for this interview. I much appreciate it.

The President. Thank you.

Q. Let me start after the—Mehlis report. You described the report as deeply disturbing. Does the United States, your administration, support imposing sanctions on Syria?

The President. Here's what we support. We support that the world take this report very seriously, that there were some very strong implications in the report, that it be fully aired, and that the United Nations start to take action. Tomorrow there's a meeting of the perm reps, permanent representatives, and I've instructed Secretary Rice to call upon the United Nations to host a foreign ministers meeting as quickly as possible.

Syria

Q. Are we heading into a confrontation with Syria?

The President. I certainly hope not. I mean, I think one of the things that Syria has learned is that noncompliance with international demands will yield to isolation. Fifteen fifty-nine was a very serious statement by the free world and the United Nations to say to Syria, "Get out of Lebanon. Leave Lebanon alone. Let the Lebanon democracy flourish and function." She saw—she, being Syria—saw that the world spoke in voice, one voice.

And nobody wants there to be a confrontation. On the other hand, there must be serious pressure applied so that the leader understands that, one, they can't house terrorist groups that will destroy the peace process with Israel and Palestine, for example; two, they should stop meddling in Lebanon; three, that they should stop allowing transit of bombers and killers into Iraq that are killing people that want there to be a democracy. In other words, there are some clear demands by the world. And this Mehlis report, as I say, had serious implications for Syria, and the Syrian Government must take the demands of the free world very seriously.

France/Diplomacy

Q. The French—as you know, the French Prime Minister wants to introduce a resolution for Syria to cooperate with the investigation. Would you support that?

The President. The French foreign minister——

Q. They want to introduce a resolution in the United Nations, in the Security Council, basically calling on Syria to cooperate further in the investigation into the killing——

The President. Oh, I see. Sure. Well, listen, we're working very closely with the French. We did on 1559, and there was

a clear message as a result of the cooperation between the U.S. Government, the French, and many other governments, and Condi Rice, who I spoke to today, is still in consultations with the French to make sure we have a common message.

Q. I know you said before that you're focusing on diplomatic options, but the military one is still on the table. Would you resort to that?

The President. Well, listen, nobody wants to use the military. A military is always the last choice of a President. I understand the use of military, and I know how hard it can be. And I'm—any time anybody loses their life in our military, I weep for the families. And I know innocent people can sometimes be in harm's way, so the military is always the last option. And this is a chance for the world to work together to achieve a diplomatic solution.

And our diplomats, starting with Secretary Rice, are working very hard to come up with a common position to make it clear to Syria that there are clear and understandable demands. And I've just listed some of them earlier. Listen, as you know, you and I have worked together, and you've seen the emergence of a potential Palestinian state that I strongly embrace, but we must not allow terrorists to operate out of Syria. That would derail the peace process. It's not fair to the people of Gaza. It's not fair to the people of the West Bank. And so that is one clear demand, that Syria must shut down these camps and not allow terrorists groups to have safe haven in Syria.

We want the Lebanese democracy to flourish. And so Syria should not be—should no longer be involved in Lebanon. They removed their troops, like was told to them in 1559, but it also was clear it said, "Get rid of all your intelligence services and your operations out of there." And the Mehlis report implicates Syria's involvement in the death of Mr. Hariri, who was a fine man.

And of course, one of the concerns I have and that other countries have as well is Syria becoming a transit place for these killers that are going into Iraq and killing Muslims, killing innocent women and children. And it's just—they got to understand there is a—there's a worldwide concern about their failure to act.

Q. If they don't cooperate, what would you do?

The President. Well, I'm hoping that they will. They did on 1559 in terms of getting their troops out. In other words, there's a diplomatic—you're trying to get me to say something—I'm going to use our military. It is the last, very last option. And no Commander in Chief likes to commit the military, and I don't. But on the other hand, you know—and I've worked hard for diplomacy and will continue to work the diplomatic angle on this issue.

Q. We've seen similar models before. Some people talk about the Libyan model, i.e. sanction, long term, and then the Libyans will hand over the suspects—or the Iraqi one——

The President. Well, I think each country is different. Saddam Hussein had, gosh, a lot of resolutions out of the United Nations. Year after year after year after year, the United Nations said, "Do this," and he never complied. And so it's—he was—diplomacy wasn't working. And my attitude is, let's give diplomacy a chance to work. Obviously, we'd like to resolve any issue in a peaceful way. And that's the main goal of the United States.

China and Russia

Q. Obviously, you have the French and the British on board, but what about the Chinese and the Russians? Who will support—will you get their support?

The President. Well, that's an interesting question. I think it's too early to tell. I certainly hope that people take a good look at the Mehlis report. Mr. Mehlis did a very thorough job, and it speaks—there's clear implications about Syrian's involvement in

the death of a foreign leader. And the United States was willing to help—work with other countries, and we will, to make sure that out of the United Nations comes a clear message.

Possible Trial in an International Court

Q. As you know, Saad Hariri, who's the son of the slain President—Prime Minister Rafiq Hariri, is asking for an international court. Would the United States support the trial in an international court for the suspects?

The President. Well, we want people to be held to account. And I'd be glad to talk to other leaders to determine whether or not that's the best course of action. But certainly, people do need to be held to account. And the first course of action is to go the United Nations.

Q. But further, would you——

The President. Well, we'll have to see.

Q. ——support that or not?

The President. We'll have to see.

Trial of Saddam Hussein

Q. If we move to Iraq.

The President. Sure.

Q. I would like to know, how would you evaluate the performance of Saddam Hussein during the trial? Do you think he's weakened? He's still defiant?

The President. That's hard for me to tell. The key thing is that there will be a fair trial, which is something he didn't give many of the thousand people he killed. It's—there's going to be a lot of international scrutiny. There will be a lot of press coverage. People are going to be watching very carefully. And what matters is the fact that he will be brought to trial in a fair way.

Q. And do you think that, eventually, the situation is safe enough for this court to take place? Is Baghdad safe enough for Saddam to be tried there?

The President. I think it is, yes, I do. I mean, listen, it's safe enough to have an election nationwide, where these killers were saying, "We'll kill you if you vote," and a lot of people went and voted. In other words, it's possible to provide security. But I think the trial needs to go forward.

Q. But you know, Mr. President, one of the defense lawyers was killed——

The President. Oh, I know. It's just terrible.

Q. So how can you make sure it's fair trial——

The President. No, I understand. Well, there will be a fair trial. The question is whether or not there's the courage to go ahead with the trial. And I think the people of Iraq would like to see Saddam Hussein tried for the crimes he committed.

Q. Would you support again an international trial for him?

The President. No, I didn't. I didn't at all. I think it's very important for the Iraqis to have a justice system that earns the confidence of the people. This is a new democracy, and part of a democracy is to have a fair judicial system. And I thought it was very important for the Iraqi—citizens of Iraq to conduct the trial in such a way that it earned international respect.

Iraqi Elections/Constitution

Q. You had started talks with the Sunni opposition parties. What happened to that? Where—are you advancing in the talks with them?

The President. With the Sunnis?

Q. Yes.

The President. Well, first of all, the United States of America will not try to pick a winner in the upcoming election. We talked—our Ambassador Zal Khalilzad was involved with trying to help the parties come together and make a deal on the constitution, to get people's participation and get people involved with the—show that the process can work through discussion and compromise.

And when it comes to the elections, upcoming elections, should the constitution get passed—and it looks like it might—

there will be an election for a permanent government. The United States will not pick a winner. That's going to be up to the Iraqi people. Our mission will be to encourage all people to participate in the process.

It's been amazing, what's happened in Iraq, when you really think about it. Millions of people voted last January. Nobody—a lot of people didn't think that would happen. And then this new constitution was written. You know, it's a document that is—it caused a lot of debate, and people showed anxieties or supported part of it, but it's a document that can be changed with a democratically elected government, just like what happened to our Constitution. I mean, the United States Constitution created a lot of anxiety when it was first passed, and then it was amended right off the bat. But I'm very—I've got to tell you, I am impressed by the courage of the Iraqi citizens and pleased with the progress.

Iraqi Security Situation

Q. Are you satisfied with the security situation? It's pretty dismal there.

The President. Well, it's tough, but the security—no question. And the enemy, these killers, have got one weapon, and that is to get on TV by killing innocent people. And it's a powerful weapon; don't get me wrong. And what they're trying to do is shake our will. They would like us to leave. They would like to take advantage of a weak situation, so they can begin to spread their dark vision of how they ought to—want to rule countries and regions. They have hijacked a great religion. Islam is peace. It's not war. It's not killing innocent children and innocent women.

And these—Zawahiri, as you know, there was a letter to Zarqawi that came out, and it talked about his vision of driving America out of parts of the world and overthrowing governments to be able to implement their vision of a society in which women don't have rights or a society in which you can't worship freely. And it's a society in which they can plan attacks on other people. And they've got one weapon. They don't have a philosophy. People don't say, "Gosh, I want to follow them because there's such a better tomorrow." And the only weapon they've got is to kill innocent people, and they're trying to shake our will.

And there's no question the images are terrible. Americans weep when they hear about the loss of life like that. On the other hand, the security situation is improving. When you look at the fact that they just had an election, and that—we can't stop random acts of violence, but the Iraqi security forces are better prepared to defend themselves. And over time, they'll become even better. And as I told the American people, as the Iraqis stand up, we will stand down. And we're headed in that direction right now.

Upcoming Palestinian Election/Hamas

Q. I have to go quickly to the Palestinian situation. First, Abu Mazen visit. I know this one is supposed to be primarily about the Palestinians. But would you support the outcome of the results—as you know, you discussed this with Abu Mazen—of the election, the Palestinian election in January, if Hamas wins, regardless?

The President. Well, you know, I told him that it's very difficult to have a—first of all, it depends upon whether there was armed citizens. I mean, you can't have a political party that's, on the one hand, based on philosophy, on the other hand, based upon violence and use of force through arms. He understands that.

Let me step back if I could. I was impressed by my visit with President Abbas. He's a courageous man. He told me some things that were very strong in terms of the development of democracy, which I appreciate, because, as you know, I've articulated the vision of a Palestinian state, a democracy, living side by side with Israel. And I think it can happen. And I know, first and foremost, it takes strong leadership.

And President Abbas showed me something in the Oval Office, which is, one, a deep desire to defeat terror and promote democracy. And he understands, as he said, that we can't have armed gangs, whether they be in a political party or not. They're destabilizing the situation, and so he's had, one authority, one law, one gun policy. And I believe he means it.

Q. Right. So you would like him to disarm the Hamas and Jihad before the election?

The President. Well, as he said, what he's going to do is to make sure there's no armed presence on the streets, and I would like for him to follow through on that. I believe that his party will win because his party is one of peace, and I think most people want peace.

One of the interesting things is, in this campaign, is that he will be able to say, "I worked with Israel to get Israelis out of Gaza." Now, had you and I been discussing this a year-and-a-half ago, because I know this is an issue very dear to your heart, and I would have said, "The settlements will be dismantled, and Israel will be out of Gaza," you would have looked at me and said, "I don't think you know what you're talking about, Mr. President." And sure enough, it happened. Prime Minister Sharon gets a lot of credit for that, as does President Abbas.

Very few people thought it could—this—there could be enough cooperation for the withdrawal to be peaceful. Both men had to deal with difficult political situations as a result of the decision. And now we need to move forward, and the United States wants to help. And we want to help—you asked me if—if people get elected, they're going to use violence as a tool, there won't be our help. We just won't be involved. If people get elected who say, "We want to advance peace and prosperity of the Palestinian people," we'll be involved.

Timetable for Peace/Palestinians

Q. Finally, very final question.

The President. No, you can keep going.

Q. Thank you. When we talk about the Palestinian state, I know you are the first President—you heard this many times before—you are the first President to call for a Palestinian state. You don't like timetables. Why—can you clarify what you say the other day—why don't you want to push the parties towards a final status negotiation, and say, "By this date, we're working towards it"?

The President. Absolutely. I said—I appreciate—thank you for giving me the chance to clarify a statement. Look, I said I would like this to happen before I end being President, and I would. And we are going to push. I mean, one of the reasons—well, Condi and I talk about this all the time, Condi Rice and I, about how we'd very much like to see a Palestinian democracy achieve its status as a state. I'd love that if I were the President; I think it would be a great historic achievement for everybody involved. And so I did put out a firm date, and I'm going to work hard for that date.

On the other hand, you don't want an American President making decisions for other people based upon his own political calendar or his own time in office, is what I really meant to say. I don't think it's fair. And this is going to be a process, as you know, that will be two steps forward and one step back and two steps forward. And the United States is fully committed to the roadmap, we're fully committed to helping going forward, and we're fully committed to practical things on the ground.

You know, I had General Ward in the other day. And as I told you at the press conference, we're going to replace General Ward soon, and I meant that. There needs to be continued help of—to help President Abbas be able to deal with the security situation. One authority, one law, one gun—in order to have one authority, one law, one gun, you got to have—got to reform forces that are able to respond.

Secondly, I talk to Jim Wolfensohn a lot. Now, there's a practical man. And the greenhouse is a good example of practical application of U.S. desire to help get the economy going.

Look, I fully understand the Rafah crossing needs to be opened, and I think it will be sooner rather than later, and we're pushing hard. But there's other crossings that need to happen. There needs to—in order for the Palestinian economy to grow, there needs to be—there needs to be crossings in—yes, in northern Gaza, in Israel, so people can go and work and come back and bring enterprise. Israeli capital needs to take a look at enterprise zones within the Gaza so that there's a chance for people to find work. Foreign capital needs to be encouraged to go into Gaza so that the—so that good Palestinians can work.

Let me tell you something about what I know. First of all, I've been very impressed by the caliber of the Palestinians I've met, and I've met quite a few. They're very smart, very well educated, and very entrepreneurial. The Palestinians are good businesspeople. And they want to be free. And they're peaceful; they really are peaceful. And they have a chance to—and I've told this to Abu Mazen; I said, "You've got a fantastic population. Let's—now is your chance to lead them."

As you know, I welcomed some of his young team.

Q. I know about that meeting.

The President. Yes, we had the chief of staff, and his spokesperson is a lovely lady who is a very well-educated person, went back to the—to Palestine to try to serve what she hopes will be a country. I was impressed by these young, dynamic, capable, peace-loving people.

And so I think we've got a very good chance to succeed. I want it to happen before I'm President, but it's not about me. That's my point. It's about the Palestinians, and it's about the Israelis, all of whom want to—many of whom want to get rid of the past and have a more glorious future by living side by side in peace and democracy. And it's—I think it's going to happen.

Q. I hope so. Thank you very much, sir.

The President. Thanks.

Q. Thank you for your time. Thank you. Wonderful.

The President. Very good interview.

Q. Well, one day I'm going to run as the mayor of Gaza, so probably I need your help. [*Laughter*]

The President. Absolutely. After I'm President, I'll go help you. [*Laughter*]

NOTE: The interview was taped at 3:39 p.m. in the Library at the White House for later broadcast. In his remarks, the President referred to President Bashar al-Asad of Syria; Minister of Foreign Affairs Philippe Douste-Blazy of France; former Prime Minister Rafiq Hariri of Lebanon, who was assassinated on February 14 in Beruit; Detlev Mehlis, head, United Nations International Independent Investigation Commission into the assassination of former Prime Minister Hariri; former President Saddam Hussein of Iraq; U.S. Ambassador to Iraq Zalmay Khalilzad; Ayman Al-Zawahiri, founder of the Egyptian Islamic Jihad and senior Al Qaida associate; senior Al Qaida associate Abu Musab Al Zarqawi; President Mahmoud Abbas (Abu Mazen) of the Palestinian Authority, and his chief of staff, Rafiq Husseini; Prime Minister Ariel Sharon of Israel; Lt. Gen. William E. "Kip" Ward, USA, Senior U.S. Security Coordinator, Department of State; and James D. Wolfensohn, Quartet Special Envoy for Gaza Disengagement. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this interview.

Remarks at the Joint Armed Forces Officers' Wives Luncheon
October 25, 2005

Thank you all. Thanks for having me. Please be seated. Thank you for the kind introduction, Jonnie, and thanks for the warm welcome. I appreciate being invited to come. It's such an honor to be here to stand up with so many strong and caring women—and a few men—[*laughter*]—who are devoted to their husbands and their wives and to our country.

I remember when Laura came over here to speak before; she had a heck of a good time. I bet you're probably wishing she was back. [*Laughter*] This is the 28th anniversary of this luncheon. Laura and I happen to have our 28th anniversary of our own coming up Saturday. You helped me remember. [*Laughter*] It's the best decision I ever made, was marrying Laura in Midland, Texas. Some question whether or not it was the best decision she ever made. [*Laughter*]

Speaking about decisions, I've got another decision to make, and maybe after the lunch, you can help me, and that is, what do I get her on the 28th anniversary? [*Laughter*] Never mind. [*Laughter*] Never mind. [*Laughter*] Sorry I asked. [*Laughter*]

Today America also honors the memory of one of the most inspiring women of the 20th century, Rosa Parks. Fifty years ago, in Montgomery, Alabama, this humble seamstress stood up to injustice by refusing a bus driver's order that she give up her seat for a white man. Her show of defiance was an act of personal courage that moved millions, including a young preacher named Martin Luther King. Rosa Parks's example helped touch off the civil rights movement and transformed America for the better. She will always have a special place in American history, and our Nation thinks of Rosa Parks and her loved ones today.

I appreciate Lynne Pace, honorary chairman of the luncheon, and Cindy G. [*Laughter*] I tried it once—[*laughter*]—and I'm not trying it again. [*Laughter*] I want to thank Linda Odierno. It's good to see Joyce Rumsfeld, Meryl Chertoff, who is the wife of Mike Chertoff, Dotty England, Mary Harvey. And I appreciate all the other spouses that are here to—that give me a chance to come.

I've got an important talk to you—I want to tell you some things. We meet at a critical time for our military and our Nation. At this hour, Americans in uniform are deployed around the world to defend our freedom and our security in the first war of the 21st century. They're carrying out dangerous missions with skill and courage and compassion. I hope you know this, but the entire Nation is proud of the men and women who wear our uniform. And so am I.

Every sailor, soldier, airman, marine, and coastguardsman who wears the uniform volunteered for duty. And they have something else in common: They all rely on the love and support of their families—their moms, their dads, their husbands, and their wives. You are the ones who send the care packages and send the e-mails. You're the ones who provide the daily encouragement for our folks overseas.

I know this is a trying time for our military spouses. Many of you have endured long separations from your husbands and wives. You miss them and worry about them and, all the while, keep things running at home. By standing behind those who serve, you're serving as well. The American people are grateful to the strength and sacrifice of our military spouses, and so am I.

Our service members and families are sacrificing for our country, and you deserve full support in return. You deserve the best possible pay. I've gladly signed legislation increasing basic military pay by 21 percent since 2001. You deserve extra compensation

when your loved ones put themselves in harmed [harm's]* way, so we've increased imminent danger pay by 50 percent, and we have more than doubled family separation pay.

You deserve comfortable and affordable places to live, so we've improved housing for families living on base, and we've eliminated out-of-pocket housing expenses for most families living off base. You deserve generous and flexible benefits, so we've made it easier for military families to get health care. We've extended tax filing deadlines. We've increased payments for servicemembers wounded in action, and we've improved education benefits for the National Guard and Reserve.

Every man and woman who volunteers to defend our Nation in battle also deserves something else: An unwavering commitment to the mission and a clear strategy for victory. On the morning of September the 11th, 2001, we saw the destruction that terrorists intend for our Nation. We know that they want to strike again. And our Nation has made a clear choice: We will confront this mortal danger to all humanity. We will not rest or tire until the war on terror is won.

In 4 years since September the 11th, the evil that reached our shores has reappeared on other days, in other places, in Mombasa and Casablanca and Riyadh and Jakarta and Istanbul and Madrid and Beslan and Taba, Netanya, Baghdad, and elsewhere. In the past few months, we've seen a new terror offensive with attacks in London, Sharm el-Sheikh, and a deadly bombing in Bali once again. All these separate images of destruction and suffering that we see on the news can seem like random and isolated acts of madness. Innocent men and women and children have died simply because they were in the wrong train or worked in the wrong building or checked into the wrong hotel. Yet, while the killers choose their victims indiscriminately, their attacks serve a clear and focused ideology, a set of beliefs and goals that are evil but not insane.

Some call this evil Islamic radicalism; others, militant Jihadism; still others, Islamo-fascism. Whatever it is called, this ideology is very different from the religion of Islam. This form of radicalism exploits Islam to serve a violent, political vision, the establishment—by terrorism, subversion, and insurgency—of a totalitarian empire that denies all political and religious freedom. These extremists distort the idea of jihad into a call for terrorist murder against Christians and Hindus and Jews and also against Muslims who do not share their radical vision, whom they regard as heretics.

Many militants are part of a—global, borderless terrorist organizations like Al Qaida, which spreads propaganda and provides financing and technical assistance to local extremists and conducts dramatic and brutal operations like the attacks of September the 11th. Other militants are found in regional groups, often associated with Al Qaida, paramilitary insurgencies and separatist movements in places like Somalia and the Philippines and Pakistan and Chechnya and Kashmir and Algeria. Still others spring up in local cells, inspired by Islamic radicalism but not centrally directed. Islamic radicalism is more like a loose network with many branches than an army under a single command. Yet these operatives, fighting on scattered battlefields, share a similar ideology and vision for our world. And we know the vision of the radicals because they've stated it openly in videos and audiotapes and letters and declarations and on web sites.

First, these extremists want to end American and Western influence in the broader Middle East, because we stand for democracy and peace, and we stand in the way of their ambitions. Al Qaida's leader, Usama bin Laden, has called on Muslims to dedicate, and I quote, their "resources, sons, and money to driving the infidels out

* White House correction.

of our lands." The tactics of Al Qaida and other Islamic extremists have been consistent for a quarter-century: They hit us and expect us to run.

Earlier this month, the world learned of a letter written by Al Qaida's number-two leader, a man named Zawahiri, a letter he wrote to his chief deputy in Iraq, the terrorist Zarqawi. In it, Zawahiri points to Vietnam as a model for Al Qaida. He writes, "The aftermath of the collapse of American power in Vietnam and how they ran and left their agents, is noteworthy." The terrorists witnessed a similar response after the attacks of American troops in Beirut in 1983, Mogadishu in 1993. They believe that America can be made to run again, only this time on a larger scale with greater consequences.

Secondly, the militant network wants to use the vacuum created by an American retreat to gain control of a country, a base from which to launch attacks and conduct their war against nonradical Muslim governments. Over the past few decades, radicals have specifically targeted Egypt and Saudi Arabia and Pakistan and Jordan for potential takeover. They've achieved their goal, for a time, in Afghanistan. And now they've set their sights on Iraq. In his recent letter, Zawahiri writes that Al Qaida views Iraq as, quote, "the place for the greatest battle." The terrorists regard Iraq as the central front in their war against humanity. And we must recognize Iraq as the central front in our war on terror.

Third, the militants believe that controlling one country will rally the Muslim masses, enabling them to overthrow all moderate governments in the region and establish a radical Islamic empire that spans from Spain to Indonesia. Zawahiri writes that the terrorists, quote, "must not have their mission end with the expulsion of Americans from Iraq." He goes on to say, "The jihad . . . requires several incremental goals . . . Expel the Americans from Iraq . . . Establish the Islamic authority over as much territory as you can to spread its power in Iraq . . . Extend the jihad wave to the secular countries neighboring Iraq," end quote.

With the greater economic and military and political power they seek, the terrorists would be able to advance their stated agenda, to develop weapons of mass destruction, to destroy Israel, to intimidate Europe, to assault the American people, and to blackmail our Government into isolation.

Some might be tempted to dismiss these goals as fanatical or extreme. Well, they are fanatical and extreme, and they should not be dismissed. Our enemy is utterly committed. As Zarqawi has vowed, "We will either achieve victory over the human race, or we will pass to the eternal life." And the civilized world knows very well that other fanatics in history, from Hitler to Stalin to Pol Pot, consumed whole nations in war and genocide before leaving the stage of history. Evil men obsessed with ambition and unburdened by conscience must be taken very seriously, and we must stop them before their crimes can multiply.

Defeating the militant network is difficult because it thrives, like a parasite, on the suffering and frustrations of others. The radicals exploit local conflicts to build a culture of victimization in which someone else is always to blame and violence is always the solution. They exploit resentful and disillusioned young men and women, recruiting them through radical mosques as the pawns of terror. And they exploit modern technology to multiply their destructive power. Instead of attending faraway training camps, recruits can now access online training libraries to learn how to build a roadside bomb or fire a rocket-propelled grenade, and this further spreads the threat of violence, even within peaceful democratic societies.

The influence of Islamic radicalism is also magnified by helpers and enablers. They've been sheltered by authoritarian regimes, allies of convenience like Syria and Iran, that share the goal of hurting America and modern Muslim governments and use

terrorist propaganda to blame their own failures on the West, on America, and on the Jews.

The radicals depend on "front" operations, such as corrupted charities which direct money to terrorist activity. They're strengthened by those who aggressively fund the spread of radical, intolerant versions of Islam in unstable parts of the world. The militants are aided as well by elements of the Arab news media that incite hatred and anti-Semitism, that feed conspiracy theories, and speak of a so-called American "war on Islam," with seldom a word about American action to protect Muslims in Afghanistan, in Bosnia, in Somalia, and Kosovo and Kuwait and Iraq, with seldom a world about—word about the generous assistance to Muslims recovering from natural disasters in places like Indonesia and Pakistan.

Some have argued that extremism has been strengthened by the actions of our coalition in Iraq, claiming that our presence in that country has somehow caused or triggered the rage of radicals. I would remind them that we were not in Iraq on September 11th, 2001, and Al Qaida attacked us anyway. The hatred of the radicals existed before Iraq was an issue, and it will exist after Iraq is no longer an excuse.

The Government of Russia did not support Operation Iraqi Freedom, and yet the militants killed more than 150 Russian schoolchildren in Beslan. Over the years, these extremists have used a litany of excuses for violence, the Israeli presence on the West Bank or the U.S. military presence in Saudi Arabia or the defeat of the Taliban or the Crusades of a thousand years ago. In fact, we're not facing a set of grievances that can be soothed and addressed. We're facing a radical ideology with inalterable objectives, to enslave whole nations and intimidate the world.

No acts of ours involve the rage of killers. And no concessions, bribe, or act of appeasement would change or limit their plans of murder. On the contrary, they target nations whose behavior they believe they can change through violence. Against such an enemy, there is only one effective response: We will never back down, never give in, and never accept anything less than complete victory.

The murderous ideology of the Islamic radicals is the great challenge of our new century. Yet, in many ways, this fight resembles the struggle against communism in the last century. Like the ideology of communism, Islamic radicalism is elitist, led by a self-appointed vanguard that presumes to speak for the Muslim masses. Bin Laden says his own role is to tell Muslims, and I quote, "what is good for them and what is not." And what this man who grew up in wealth and privilege considers good for poor Muslims is that they become killers and suicide bombers. He assures them that this is the road to paradise, though he never offers to go along for the ride. [*Laughter*]

Like the ideology of communism, our new enemy teaches that innocent individuals can be sacrificed to serve a political vision. And this explains their coldblooded contempt for human life. We've seen it in the murders of Daniel Pearl, Nicholas Berg, and Margaret Hassan, and many, many others. In a courtroom in the Netherlands, the killer of Theo van Gogh turned to the victim's grieving mother and said, "I do not feel your pain because I believe you're an infidel." And in spite of this veneer of religious rhetoric, most of the victims claimed by the militants are fellow Muslims.

When 25 Iraqi children are killed in a bombing or Iraqi teachers are executed at their school or hospital workers are killed caring for the wounded, this is murder, pure and simple, the total rejection of justice and honor and morality and religion. These militants are not just enemies of America or enemies of Iraq; they are the enemies of Islam and enemies of humanity.

We have seen this kind of shameless cruelty before in the heartless zealotry that

led to the gulags, the Cultural Revolution, and the Killing Fields. Like the ideology of communism, our new enemy pursues totalitarian aims. Its leaders pretend to be an aggrieved party, representing the powerless against imperial enemies. In truth, they have endless ambitions of imperial domination. They wish to make everyone powerless except themselves. Under their rule, they have banned books and desecrated historical monuments and brutalized women. They seek to end dissent in every form, to control every aspect of life and to rule the soul itself. While promising a future of justice and holiness, the terrorists are preparing a future of oppression and misery.

Like the ideology of communism, our new enemy is dismissive of free peoples, claiming that men and women who live in liberty are weak and decadent. Zarqawi has said that Americans are, quote, "the most cowardly of God's creatures." But let us be clear: It is cowardice that seeks to kill children and the elderly with car bombs. It's cowardice that cuts the throat of a bound captive. It is cowardice that targets worshipers leaving a mosque. It is the courage that liberated more than 50 million people. It is courage that keeps an untiring vigil against the enemies of a rising democracy. It is courage in the cause of freedom that will once again destroy the enemies of freedom.

And Islamic radicalism, like the ideology of communism, contains inherent contradictions that doom it to failure. By fearing freedom, by distrusting human creativity and punishing change and limiting the contributions of half the population, this ideology undermines the very qualities that make human progress possible and human societies successful. The only thing modern about the militants' vision is the weapons they want to use against us. The rest of their grim vision is defined by a warped image of the past, a declaration of war on the idea of progress itself. And whatever lies ahead in the war against this ideology, the outcome is not in doubt: Those who despise freedom and progress have condemned themselves to isolation, decline, and collapse. Because free peoples believe in the future, free peoples will own the future.

We didn't ask for this global struggle, but we're answering history's call with confidence and with a comprehensive strategy. Defeating a broad and adaptive network requires patience and constant pressure and strong partners in Europe, in the Middle East, in North Africa, and Asia and beyond. Working with these partners, we're disrupting militant conspiracies, destroying their ability to make war, and working to give millions in a troubled region of the world a hopeful alternative to resentment and violence.

First, we're determined to prevent the attacks of terrorist networks before they occur. We're reorganizing the Government to give this Nation a broad and coordinated homeland defense. We're reforming our intelligence agencies for the incredibly difficult task of tracking enemy activity, based on information that often comes in small fragments from widely scattered sources, here and abroad. And as we're acting, along with governments from many countries, we're doing so to destroy the terrorist networks and incapacitate their leaders.

Together with our coalition partners, we've disrupted a number of serious Al Qaida terrorist plots since September the 11th, including several Al Qaida plots to attack inside the United States. Our coalition against terror has killed or captured nearly all of those directly responsible for the September the 11th attacks, several of bin Laden's most senior deputies, Al Qaida managers and operatives in more than 24 countries, the mastermind of the USS *Cole* bombing, who was chief of Al Qaida operations in the Persian Gulf. We brought to justice the mastermind of the bombings in Jakarta and Bali, a senior Zarqawi terrorist planner, and many of Al Qaida's senior leaders in Saudi Arabia.

Because of this steady progress, the enemy is wounded, but the enemy is still capable of global operations. Our commitment is clear: We will not relent until the organized international terror networks are exposed and broken and their leaders are held to account for their murder.

Second, we're determined to deny weapons of mass destruction to outlaw regimes and to the terrorist allies who would use them without hesitation. The United States, working with Great Britain, Pakistan, and other nations, has exposed and disrupted a major black-market operation in nuclear technology led by A.Q. Khan. Libya has abandoned its chemical and nuclear weapons programs as well as its long-range ballistic missiles. In the last year, America and our partners in the Proliferation Security Initiative have stopped more than a dozen shipments of suspected weapons technology, including equipment for Iran's ballistic missile program. This progress has reduced the danger of free nations, but it has not removed it. Evil men who want to use horrendous weapons against us are working in deadly earnest to gain them. And we're working urgently to keep weapons of mass murder out of the hands of those fanatics.

Third, we're determined to deny radical groups the support and sanctuary of outlaw regimes. State sponsors like Syria and Iran have a long history of collaboration with terrorists, and they deserve no patience from the victims of terror. The United States makes no distinction between those who commit acts of terror and those who support and harbor them, because they are equally guilty of murder. Any government that chooses to be an ally of terror has chosen to be an enemy of civilization, and the civilized world must hold those regimes to account.

This week, the United Nations Security Council will hear a new report from an independent commission that points to Syrian involvement in the terrorist bombing that killed former Lebanese Prime Minister Hariri and 22 others last February. Syria is destabilizing Lebanon, permitting terrorists to use its territory to reach Iraq, and giving safe harbor to Palestinian terrorist groups. The United Nations has passed strong resolutions against terror. Now the United Nations must act, and Syria and its leaders must be held accountable for their continuing support for terrorism, including any involvement in the murder of Prime Minister Hariri.

Fourth, we're determined to deny the militants control of any nation, which they would use as a home base and launching pad for terror. This mission has brought new and urgent responsibilities to our Armed Forces, and because of that, it's brought urgent responsibilities to you all. American troops are fighting beside Afghan partners against remnants of the Taliban and their Al Qaida allies. We're working with President Musharraf to oppose and isolate the militants in Pakistan. We're fighting the regime remnants and terrorists in Iraq. The terrorists' goal is to overthrow a rising democracy, claim a strategic country as a haven for terror, destabilize the Middle East, and strike America and other free nations with ever-increasing violence. Our goal is to defeat the terrorists and their allies at the heart of their power, and so we will defeat the enemy in Iraq.

Our coalition, along with our Iraqi allies, is moving forward with a comprehensive plan. As Secretary Rice explained last week, our strategy is to clear, hold, and build. We're working to clear areas from terrorist control, to hold those areas securely, and to build lasting, democratic Iraqi institutions. In recent weeks, American and Iraqi troops have conducted several major assaults to clear out enemy fighters in western Iraq and to help shut down terrorist entry routes from Syria. During one raid, our forces killed a top Zarqawi henchman named Abu Abdullah, who was responsible for attacks on American troops and on innocent Iraqis. Thousands of Iraqi forces have been participating in these operations,

and many have remained in cities along with coalition forces to hold onto our gains and prevent the enemy from returning. Iraqi forces are using their local expertise to maintain security and to make tangible improvements in the lives of their fellow Iraqis.

At the same time, Iraqis are making inspiring progress toward building a democracy. Ten days ago, millions of Iraqis turned out to vote on a constitution that guarantees fundamental freedoms and lays the foundation for lasting democracy. And today the Iraqi elections commission certified the passage of the constitution. Many more Sunnis participated in this vote than in January's historic elections, and the level of violence was dramatically lower. With their courageous vote, the Iraqi people have once again proved their determination to build a democracy united against extremism and violence.

An 85-year-old Iraqi woman cast a ballot in favor of the constitution after her son carried her on his back to the polls. Here's what she said. She said, "I went out to vote for it because I want the future to be safe and peaceful for my sons and my grandchildren."

We got more work to do, and it involves great risk for Iraqis and for American and coalition forces. A time of war is a time for sacrifice, and the greatest burden falls on military families. We've lost some of our Nation's finest men and women in the war on terror. Each of these men and women left grieving families and left loved ones back home. Each of these patriots left a legacy that will allow generations of their fellow Americans to enjoy the blessings of liberty. Each loss of life is heartbreaking. And the best way to honor the sacrifice of our fallen troops is to complete the mission and lay the foundation of peace by spreading freedom.

The sacrifices made by you and your loved ones in uniform are always on our minds and in our prayers. All of you also understand that sacrifice is essential to winning war, and this war will require more sacrifice, more time, and more resolve. The terrorists are as brutal an enemy as we have ever faced, unconstrained by any notion of common humanity and by the rules of warfare. No one should underestimate the difficulties ahead nor should they overlook the advantages we bring to this fight.

Some observers look at the job ahead and adopt a self-defeating pessimism. It's not justified. With every random bombing and every funeral of a child, it becomes more clear that the extremists are not patriots or resistance fighters; they are murderers at war with the Iraqi people themselves. In contrast, the elected leaders of Iraq are proving to be strong and steadfast. By any standard or precedent of history, Iraq has made incredible political progress, from tyranny to liberation, to national elections, to the ratification of a constitution in the space of 2½ years.

And with our help, the Iraqi military is gaining new capabilities and new confidence with every passing month. At the time of our Fallujah operations nearly a year ago, there were only a few Iraqi army battalions in combat. Today, there are nearly 90 Iraqi army battalions fighting the terrorists alongside our forces. General David Petraeus said, "Iraqis are in the fight. They're fighting and dying for their country, and they're fighting increasingly well." The progress isn't easy, but it is steady. And no fair-minded person should ignore, deny, or dismiss the achievements of the Iraqi people.

Some observers question the durability of democracy in Iraq. They underestimate the power and appeal of freedom. We've heard it suggested Iraq's democracy must be on shaky ground because Iraqis are arguing with each other. [*Laughter*] That's the essence of democracy. [*Laughter*] You make your case; you debate those who disagree with you; you build consensus by persuasion; and you answer to the will of the people.

We've heard it said that the Shi'a and Sunnis and Kurds of Iraq are too divided to form a lasting democracy. In fact, democratic federalism is the best hope for unifying a diverse population, because a federal constitutional system respects the rights and religious traditions of all citizens while giving all minorities, including the Sunnis, a stake and a voice in the future of their country.

It's true that the seeds of freedom have only recently been planted in Iraq, but democracy, when it grows, is not a fragile flower. It's a healthy, sturdy tree. As Americans, we believe that people everywhere prefer freedom to slavery and that liberty, once chosen, improves the lives of all. And so we're confident, as our coalition and the Iraqi people each do their part, Iraqi democracy will succeed.

Some observers also claim that America would be better off by cutting our losses and leaving Iraq now. This is a dangerous illusion, refuted by a simple question: Would the United States and other free nations be more safe or less safe with Zarqawi and bin Laden in control of Iraq, its people, and its resources? Having removed a dictator who hated free peoples, we will not stand by as a new set of killers, dedicated to the destruction of our country, seizes control of Iraq by violence.

There's always a temptation in the middle of a long struggle to seek the quiet life, to escape the duties and problems of the world, to hope the enemy grows weary of fanaticism and tired of murder. That would be a pleasant world, but it isn't the world in which we live. The enemy is never tired, never sated, never content with yesterday's brutality. This enemy considers every retreat of the civilized world as an invitation to greater violence. In Iraq, there is no peace without victory, and we will keep our nerve, and we will win that victory.

The fifth element of our strategy in the war on terror is to deny the militants of future recruits by replacing hatred and resentment with democracy and hope across the broader Middle East. This is difficult, and it's a long-term project. Yet there's no alternative to it. Our future and the future of that region are linked. If the broader Middle East is left to grow in bitterness, if countries remain in misery while radicals stir the resentments of millions, then that part of the world will be a source of endless conflict and mounting danger in our own generation and in the next. If the peoples of that region are permitted to choose their own destiny and advance by their own energy and participation as free men and women, then the extremists will be marginalized, and the flow of violent radicalism to the rest of the world will slow and eventually end. By standing for the hope and freedom of others, we make our own freedom more secure.

America is making this stand in practical ways. We are encouraging our friends in the Middle East, including Egypt and Saudi Arabia, to take the path of reform, to strengthen their own societies in the fight against terror by respecting the rights and choices of their own people. We're standing with dissidents and exiles against oppressive regimes, because we know that the dissidents of today will be the democratic leaders of tomorrow. We're making our case through public diplomacy, stating clearly and confidently our belief in self-determination and the rule of law and religious freedom and equal rights for women, beliefs that are right and true in every land and in every culture.

And as we do our part to confront radicalism, we know that the most vital work will be done within the Islamic world itself. And this work has begun. Many Muslim scholars have publicly condemned terrorism, often citing Chapter 5, Verse 32 of the Koran, which states that killing an innocent human being is the killing of all humanity—is like killing all humanity, and saving the life of one person is like saving all of humanity.

After the attacks in London on July the 7th, an imam in the UAE declared, "Whoever does such a thing is not a Muslim nor a religious person." The time has come for all responsible Islamic leaders to join in denouncing an ideology that exploits Islam for political ends and defiles a noble faith.

Many people of the Muslim faith are proving their commitment at great personal risk. Everywhere we have engaged the fight against extremism, Muslim allies have stood up and joined the fight, becoming partners in a vital cause. Afghan troops are in combat against Taliban remnants. Iraqi soldiers are sacrificing to defeat the Al Qaida in their own country. These brave citizens know the stakes, the survival of their own liberty, the future of their own region, the justice and humanity of their own tradition, and we are proud to stand beside them.

With the rise of a deadly enemy and the unfolding of a global ideological struggle, our time in history will be remembered for new challenges and unprecedented dangers. And yet the fight we've joined is also the current expression of an ancient struggle between those who put their faith in dictators and those who put their faith in the people. Throughout history, tyrants and would-be tyrants have always claimed that murder is justified to serve their grand vision, and they end up alienating decent people across the globe. Tyrants and would-be tyrants have always claimed that regimented societies are strong and pure, until those societies collapse in corruption and decay. Tyrants and would-be tyrants have always claimed that free men and women are weak and decadent, until the day that free men and women defeat them.

We don't know the course of—our own struggle will take or the sacrifices that might lie ahead. We do know, however, that the defense of freedom is worth our sacrifice. We do know that the love of freedom is the mightiest force of history. We do know the strength and character that our troops and military families bring to the fight, and we do know that the cause of freedom will once again prevail.

These are historic times. It's a vital time for our Nation and the world. And I want to thank you for your courage and thank you for your sacrifice. May God bless your loved ones. May God bless you, and may God continue to bless our country.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:33 a.m. at Bolling Air Force Base. In his remarks, he referred to Jonnie Nance, chairman, Joint Armed Forces Officers' Wives Luncheon; Lynne Pace, wife of Gen. Peter Pace, USMC, Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff; Cindy Giambastiani, wife of Adm. Edmund P. Giambastiani, USN, Vice Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff; Linda Odierno, wife of Lt. Gen. Raymond T. Odierno, USA, Assistant to the Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff; Joyce Rumsfeld, wife of Secretary of Defense Donald H. Rumsfeld; Meryl J. Chertoff, wife of Secretary of Homeland Secretary Michael Chertoff; Dorothy "Dotty" England, wife of Secretary of the Navy Gordon R. England; Mary Harvey, wife of Secretary of the Army Francis J. Harvey; Usama bin Laden, leader of the Al Qaida terrorist organization; Ayman Al-Zawahiri, founder of the Egyptian Islamic Jihad and senior Al Qaida associate; senior Al Qaida associate Abu Musab Al Zarqawi; Mohammed Bouyeri, who was convicted of the Novmeber 2, 2004, murder of film director Theo van Gogh; Anneke van Gogh, mother of Theo van Gogh; Abd al-Rahim al-Nashiri, Al Qaida's chief of operations for the Persian Gulf; Nurjaman Riduan Isamuddin (also known as Hambali), Al Qaida's chief operational planner in Southeast Asia; A.Q. Khan, former head of Pakistan's nuclear program; President Pervez Musharraf of Pakistan; Lt. Gen. David H. Petraeus, USA, former commander, Multi-National Security Transition Command—Iraq; and former President Saddam Hussein of Iraq. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of these remarks.

Remarks Following Discussions With President Massoud Barzani of the Iraqi Kurdistan Regional Government

October 25, 2005

President Bush. It's my honor to welcome President Barzani of the Kurdistan Regional Government of Iraq to the Oval Office. He's a man of courage. He's a man who has stood up to a tyrant.

He wore this outfit because it wasn't all that long ago, if he had worn this outfit and was captured by Saddam Hussein's thugs, he would have been killed for wearing it. He feels comfortable wearing it here because we're a free land, and he feels comfortable wearing it in his home country because Iraq is free.

We had a very good discussion. The President was very helpful on the current constitution. I assured him that America will stand with the people that desire a free and democratic Iraq. The President is—has got a clear vision of the future of Iraq, one where different religions and different backgrounds—people of different religions and backgrounds can live together in peace.

And so, Mr. President, welcome. It's an honor to have you here.

President Barzani. Mr. President, allow me on behalf of the people of Kurdistan and myself to thank you very much. We in Kurdistan, particularly, and also in Iraq, generally, we highly value the courage and bravery of your leadership. I hope that everybody would realize what the fact on the ground is about Iraq. It was a brave decision that you have made. You have liberated a people from a dictatorial regime that has hurt a lot of the people.

At this time we express our condolences, and we express our sympathy to the families of your brave men and women in uniform, those who have sacrificed their lives in order to make other people free and liberated. There is no doubt that if we step back from this and not be determined, be rest assured that the terrorists will come to the gates of you and us, and they will fight us. Therefore, we have to think about nothing else but victory. And I'm quite confident that with your leadership, with your support and support of the United States military and United States people and also the—heroes of the people of Iraq, in general, the people of Kurdistan, we will achieve success at the end.

For those who are antidemocratic and also those who are against the process, they are very limited, and those who are supportive of your leadership, supportive of democratic process, they are many, and they highly appreciate the sacrifices that have been made by the American people and the American army. There are also many in Iraq, in general, and also in Kurdistan, all of them are appreciative.

Thank you.

President Bush. Thank you, sir. Thanks for coming.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:46 p.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. President Barzani spoke in Kurdish, 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 on Continuation of the National Emergency Regarding the Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction
October 25, 2005

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 to the *Federal Register* for publication the enclosed notice, stating that the emergency posed by the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery declared by Executive Order 12938 on November 14, 1994, as amended, is to continue in effect beyond November 14, 2005. The most recent notice continuing this emergency was signed on November 4, 2004, and published in the *Federal Register* on November 8, 2004 (69 *FR* 64637).

Because the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and the means of delivering them continues to pose an unusual and extraordinary threat to the national security, foreign policy, and economy of the United States, I have determined the national emergency previously declared must continue in effect beyond November 14, 2005.

GEORGE W. BUSH

The White House,
October 25, 2005.

NOTE: The notice is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

Remarks at the Republican National Committee Dinner
October 25, 2005

Thank you all. Thanks for coming. Please be seated. Thanks for the warm welcome. Mehlman didn't get the dress code—[*laughter*]—and neither did I. [*Laughter*] Thanks for having me. I'm proud to be here on the 30th birthday of the Eagles.

For three decades, Eagles have given great parties—[*laughter*]—but more importantly, they've supported our party. And I'm grateful. I want to thank you for all your help in years past. I want to thank you for your help this year. I want to thank you for the help in years to come. And it's important because it helps us get our message out, which is an optimistic vision for our country. We have a hopeful philosophy. We understand that government ought to be limited and that we ought to trust people to make decisions for their lives. We understand that the best way to grow an economy is to allow small-business owners and entrepreneurs to keep more of their own money, so they can invest and create jobs. We understand that this country has a duty to take care of those who hurt and to lead the world in laying the foundation for peace. Ours is a party of vision, and ours is a party of accomplishment. And I want to thank you for supporting it.

I gave a speech today, earlier, and I was reminded during the speech that Laura and I are fixing to have a wedding anniversary. Sometimes giving speeches helps kind of trigger the memory bank. [*Laughter*] I

asked the crowd there if they had any suggestions on what I ought to give her for the 28th wedding anniversary. Somebody yelled out, diamonds. And then, of course, I went straight to the speech. [*Laughter*]

But the reason I bring her up is, she sends her love and her best to all of you all. She is a great wife and a fantastic First Lady for the country.

I want to thank the chairman for the RNC, Ken Mehlman, for doing such a fantastic job. He's smart, and he's capable. He's taking our message all across the country. He's not afraid to go into halls where some might have an image of the Republican Party that isn't true. He knows what I know, that our philosophy is good for every American. And I want to thank you for your leadership, Ken, and I appreciate your service. And I also want to thank Jo Ann Davidson, who's the cochairman of the RNC. Thank you for being here.

I know we've got a Member of the United States Senate with us, a man who ran a heck of a race, really decent and honorable fellow, John Thune of South Dakota—somewhere around.

I appreciate Dwight Schar, the finance chairman of the RNC, and Martha. Thank you for your hard work, and thank you for your leadership. I appreciate Bill Paxon, who's the chairman of the RNC Majority Fund. I want to thank Bill for bringing his young daughter here tonight. I want to thank my friend Katie Boyd, who's the Eagles cochairman—thank you for being here, Katie—and Mike Duncan, who's the general counsel of the RNC.

But most of all, thank you all for giving me a chance to come by and thank you and share some thoughts with you. First, I want to tell you that my job is to confront problems and not pass them on. My job is to make decisions on behalf of the people of this country. And I've got to tell you, I'm enjoying every minute of it. Our party is a party that is based upon sound principles. And one of the things I've learned here in Washington is you can't make good decisions unless you stand on principle. And that's exactly what I've done as your leader, and that's exactly what I'll continue to do.

I've spent a lot of time thinking about this war on terror. I wish I could tell you it's over. It's not. We face a brutal enemy that has got an ideology and a strategy to impose their view on the world. They believe the exact opposite of what we believe in America. They believe that they should dictate religion. They believe that they ought to control the lives of all people. They are totalitarian in nature.

We stand for freedom. We believe that every man, woman, and child in America should be free to worship as he or she feels. We believe that democracy is the best form of government to encourage progress and hope. We believe that women should be free. That's not what they think.

They've got one weapon, and that is their willingness to take innocent life. They'll kill women and children in order to try to achieve their aims. One of their objectives is to run America out of the broader Middle East. And they want to do so because they want to take over countries. They want to try to not only impose their vision on a group of people but also to have safe havens for—to plot and plan, to kill in greater numbers.

September the 11th was an important moment in the history of this country, and we still mourn for those who lost their lives. But I'll never forget the task at hand, and the task at hand is to find those enemies and bring them to justice before they hurt America again.

These folks—we don't face a set of grievances that can be soothed or addressed. No act of ours invited the rage of the killers, and no concession, bribe, or act of appeasement would change or limit their plans for murder. Against such an enemy, there's only one effective response: We'll never back down; we'll never give in; and never accept anything less than complete victory on the war on terror.

The killers have made it clear that Iraq is a central front in the war on terror, and we must understand that. They cannot stand the thought of a democracy evolving in the Middle East. They understand that freedom will lead to their defeat. And so we have a strategy. Our strategy is twofold: one, to pursue a security plan that says, we're going to find these killers and find these foreign terrorists and bring them to justice so they don't kill innocent people. And at the same time, we're going to train Iraqi forces so they can do the job themselves. As Iraqis stand up, America will stand down. And we're making good, steady progress.

And at the same time that we help secure that society, we'll work with the Iraqis to help them develop a democracy. Ken mentioned a remarkable event that took place recently, and that is that millions of Iraqis went to the polls to vote for a constitution, which today was verified as having been approved by the Iraqi people.

You know, writing a constitution is not an easy process. We had a little trouble ourselves here in America writing a constitution. And you might remember after our Constitution—and by the way, as I recall, two of the delegates from New York, the State of New York, stormed out of the Constitutional Convention. They weren't happy with what they saw.

And then, right after our Constitution was approved, you might remember, we amended it with the Bill of Rights. In other words, the Constitution is a process that brings people together, that says, "You can have a different point of view, but let's settle our differences peacefully, in the context of a democratic society." And that's what you're seeing in Iraq. We had elections in January. We had a constitution approved just last week, and there will be elections next December. Democracy is on the march, and that's important.

One of the stories I like to share with people is my relationship with Prime Minister Koizumi of Japan. He's an interesting man. He's a bold leader, as we recently saw when he tackled postal reform in Japan. I like him a lot. He is a good friend. He's a good, strong ally when it comes to keeping the peace in the Korean Peninsula. He put troops in Iraq because he understands democracy leads to peace. He is a friend of the United States of America.

Yet, 60 years ago, my dad and I'm sure some of your relatives, fought the Japanese. They were our bitter enemy. And so what took place between the time an 18-year-old Navy fighter pilot went to war and his son as President can say to a group of friends, he's got a great relationship with the Prime Minister of Japan? I'll tell you what took place: Democracy happened. Democracy has got the capability of helping keep the peace.

Some say, "Perhaps we ought to just pull out of Iraq." That is a foolhardy policy. It's a policy that would invite disaster, not only for the Iraqis but for the American citizens. We will not allow Iraq to become a safe haven for the terrorists. We will promote democracy in Iraq, and we will lay the foundation for peace for generations to come. [*Applause*] Thank you all.

My biggest job—one of my biggest jobs is to defend our homeland. One way, as you can tell, the best way to do it is to stay on the offense, which we will do. We're dismantling Al Qaida, one person at a time. It doesn't matter how long it takes or where they hide, we will stay on the hunt. And at the same time, we're protecting the homeland by changing our homeland security operations, by strengthening our intelligence. Intelligence is an incredibly important tool in order to win this first war of the 21st century. And so we've reorganized our intelligence services to make sure the President and those around me have got the best information possible to be able to protect the homeland.

We passed good laws like the PATRIOT Act. The PATRIOT Act is a very important

piece of legislation, which enables our prosecutors and law enforcement to share intelligence to break up terror cells before they strike. We've used it to good success to protect the homeland. The PATRIOT Act—provisions for the PATRIOT Act are set to expire pretty soon. I will remind the Congress that the terrorists aren't going to be going away pretty soon. We need the PATRIOT Act. Congress needs to get the PATRIOT Act to my desk, so we can have the tools necessary to protect this homeland.

I signed a Homeland Security bill the other day, and when I did so, I spent a lot of time talking about the need for this country to protect our borders. We have an obligation to the American people to increase manpower and technology, to increase retention space to secure our borders. That is a solemn duty of the United States, and it's a duty I take seriously.

And at the same time we do so, we've got to be realistic about people crossing into our country to work. We need to match willing employer with willing employee for jobs that Americans will not do, on a temporary basis. We should not be granting amnesty, but we should be saying to willing worker and willing employer, "Here's a reasonable way for you to be able to hire people." That will take pressure off our border. Step one is to secure the border; step two is to have reasonable immigration policies. That will mean our border control agents won't have to worry about people sneaking into the country to work and will have the time to stop drugs, guns, and terrorists from coming into America.

I've spent a lot of time thinking about this economy. I want people to work. We want the small-business sector to remain strong. I want you to know, I understand that most new jobs are created by small businesses. And therefore, the policies we've implemented have been aimed at the small-business sector. And that started with good, solid, sound tax relief. The tax relief we passed is working, and Congress needs to make the tax relief permanent.

Speaking about tax relief, we need to get rid of the death tax once and for all. I say it's working because the facts back me up. The unemployment rate is 5.1 percent. That's below the average rate of the seventies, eighties, and nineties. Our economy is the fastest growing economy of any major industrialized nation. Homeownership is at an alltime high. This economy is strong, and we need to make sure we don't foul it up here in Washington, DC, by spending too much of your money.

Congress needs to get this message, that we will be wise with the taxpayers' money. If a program doesn't work, we ought to eliminate it. And if a program doesn't make sense, we ought to do away with it. And we need to set priorities, and a key priority is defending this homeland.

Ken mentioned to you that the—because of our fiscal responsibility in Washington last year and because of the tax cuts and because of our economic growth, the budget was $108 billion less than expected—the budget deficit was $108 billion less than expected. Our plan is working. And I'm absolutely confident, by being wise with your money, we can help the people in the gulf coast recover from Katrina.

Here's our plan: To help offset the cost of Katrina we need to cut nonsecurity spending and achieve savings in mandatory spending. The House has got plans on the mandatory side that say $50 billion; the Senate has got plans that say $35 billion. I appreciate them working hard. It's a nice start. And there's more we can do together to say to the American people: We are setting priorities with your money, and we're going to spend it wisely, and we'll cut this deficit in half by 2009.

Yesterday, I made a decision that affects the economy. And that is, I named an outstanding individual to succeed another outstanding individual. Ben Bernanke's name has been sent up to the United States Senate to replace Alan Greenspan, and upon

confirmation, you'll know what I know, that he's a sound, solid thinker that will be a good steward at the Federal Reserve.

We've got challenges to our economy, and one of those challenges is energy. I told the American people when I ran for office in 2000—and I've been telling them ever since—we need to become less dependent on foreign sources of energy. Now, first of all, I believe and I know that conservation can impact the energy supply situation. And so here at the Federal level, we're putting good, sound conservation measures in place.

Secondly, it ought to be clear to the American people that we need more gasoline. Do you realize we haven't built a new refinery since the 1970s? For the sake of national security and for the sake of our consumers, this country needs to expand our refining capacity. And we need more terminals for liquified natural gas. I mean, if you're worried about your heating bills—and you should be—one way to deal with it is to increase the supply available for consumers. And Congress must understand that. We need to get rid of needless regulations that hamper our capacity to increase the supply of energy to you all.

And at the same time, this Government is spending money on—to develop new fuels, like biodiesel and ethanol. We've got a major hydrogen automobile project going forward. In other words, what I'm telling you is technology is going to help us achieve the objective of diversifying away from hydrocarbons so we're less dependent on foreign sources of oil.

Health care—we need a market-based, transparent, patient-centered health care system, where the Government doesn't tell you what to do, where you get to make the decisions. That's why I'm such a strong believer in health savings accounts. It's an amazing opportunity for small businesses to be able to control the cost of health care and at the same time, put their employees in charge of their health care decisions. I believe in association health plans which will allow small businesses to pool risk across jurisdictional boundaries. Small businesses ought to be able to go into the marketplace just like big businesses do, to buy insurance for their employees.

We're improving health information technology, which will help hold down the cost of medicine. We modernized Medicare, something no President or Congress has been able to do. You know, I've heard some say, "Well, Medicare, you know, it's an entitlement." Well, you're right. The Federal Government decided to provide health care for the elderly, and I decided to make sure the health care we provided for the elderly, provided elderly choices as well as prescription drug coverage.

And finally, when it comes to helping control the cost of health care, we need to do something about these frivolous lawsuits that are running good doctors out of practice. When I first came to Washington, I thought that medical liability reform was best left to the States until I saw the cost, at the Federal level, of these junk lawsuits, which not only run up premiums but also cause docs to practice defensive medicine. We spend a lot of money on health care in Washington, DC, and these junk lawsuits are running up the cost to you. Medical liability reform is a national issue that requires a national solution, and I call upon the United States Senate to get a good medical liability bill to my desk.

And speaking about legal reform, we're making some progress in Congress. But I understand, and I hope you do as well, that it's one thing to have a good judicial system where you can take a legitimate claim to court; it's another thing for lawyers to try to get rich off of filing frivolous lawsuits. We did a good job when we passed bipartisan class action reform and bankruptcy reform. And now the Congress needs to get an asbestos legal reform to my desk.

An issue that I've been talking about for quite a while is one that, oh, some said you probably shouldn't talk about. But I

didn't come here not to deal with major problems. I guess that's in my nature. And so I've been talking about Social Security. And the reason I've been talking about it is because I understand the mathematics of Social Security. There's a lot of people like me. We're called baby boomers, and we're getting ready to retire. As a matter of fact, my retirement age happens to come in 2008, when I'll be 62. It's a coincidence. [*Laughter*] And there's a lot of people like me getting ready to retire. The problem is there's not a lot of young people paying in the system to pay ever-increasing benefits to my generation. And the system is going to go broke.

When I travel around the country and look at hard-working people paying payroll taxes into a system that's going broke, I feel I have an obligation to give them a heads up. But I have a further obligation. I have an obligation to say to the United States Congress: "Just don't mark time. Get a Social Security reform passed." And we can do it. It takes political will and courage from members of both political parties. And as we reform Social Security, we have a fantastic opportunity to increase ownership throughout our society. I believe a strong Social Security package must include personal savings accounts that will allow individuals to realize the advantage of compound rate of interest and, at the same time, have an asset they call their own. We want more people owning more assets in America, and now is the chance to provide that opportunity.

I've had a chance to name two good people as nominees to the Court. And I take this obligation and responsibility very seriously. As you know, I named a good man in John Roberts to be the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, and I want to thank the United States Senate for confirming him. And I had another pick, and I named a really fine person in Harriet Miers to be considered by the United States Senate.

I was looking for somebody who knew the law, somebody who had been a good practicing attorney. Harriet Miers has been a pioneer in my State of Texas. She ran a big law firm, as a matter of fact, the first woman to do so in that firm. She was the president of the Texas State Bar Association. She was consistently named one of the 50 top women attorneys in the United States of America.

I wanted somebody who hadn't been on the court. I thought it was important for the Supreme Court to have a fresh perspective, somebody who had been practicing the law in real life. But more importantly, I was interested in having somebody on the Court who understands the judicial philosophy that I believe is important, that we ought to have people on the Court that will not legislate from the bench but will strictly interpret the Constitution of the United States. And that person is Harriet Miers.

Recently, you may have read where members of both parties have been demanding documents from the White House. See, it's very important for people to understand this issue. It's important for me to get good, sound advice in the Oval Office. It's important for people who work in the White House to be able to come in and tell me what's on their mind without fear of what they're having to tell me ends up in the newspapers. You see, in order to make sure that the President gets good advice, whether it be me or whoever is coming down the pike, there must be confidentiality in the White House. Asking for those documents is a redline, as far as I'm concerned, in protecting the White House and the ability to operate.

I don't know if you've ever read de Tocqueville. You ought to. He wrote a book in 1832 about America. He came over to look at our country and realized one of the great truths of America, and that is that the strength of our country lies in the hearts and souls of our citizens and that

in America in the 1830s, citizens came together in what he called voluntary organizations to serve a cause greater than themselves.

One of my jobs is to make sure we never lose that spirit in America. One of my jobs is to call upon our citizens to serve. For those of you who have got loved ones in the United States military, I want you to thank them on behalf of a proud Commander in Chief and tell them the American people stand squarely with those who wear the uniform.

Service goes beyond the military. Service goes beyond Washington. You can serve our country by teaching a child how to read. You can serve our country by mentoring the lonely or feeding the hungry or providing shelter for the homeless. You know, one of the amazing things in the aftermath of Katrina was the incredible response. Citizens all across the country who opened their arms and welcomed a stranger in need—that's the true spirit of America.

And those of us in Washington, DC, must constantly work to keep that spirit alive and strong. And one of the most important initiatives of my Presidency is the Faith-Based and Community Based Initiative. It recognizes that government is limited in its capacity to love. It's an initiative that says faith-based programs—people of all faith—can compete for Federal money to help us cure society's ills. We must not fear the involvement of faith in helping change America, one heart at a time. We must welcome faith in changing America, one heart at a time.

I am amazed by the spirit of this country. It is strong, and it is resilient. And it is because we're a land of amazing people. We've got people who have newly arrived to our country who realize this is a land where you can dream the big dream and achieve security for your family if you work hard. We're a land where neighborhood healers step up and answer the universal call to love a neighbor, and they don't even need the Government to tell them to. We're a land where people bind together to achieve big things. That's America, and it is an incredible honor to be the President of such an incredibly strong and compassionate and decent country.

I want to thank you for giving me a chance. I want to thank you for supporting our cause. May God bless you all, and may God continue to bless our country.

NOTE: The President spoke at 6:55 p.m. at the Andrew W. Mellon Auditorium. In his remarks, he referred to Martha Schar, wife of Republican National Committee finance chair Dwight Schar; and Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi of Japan.

Remarks to the Economic Club of Washington, DC
October 26, 2005

Thank you, all. It's about time you invited a President. [*Laughter*] Thanks for having me. As you know, there was an important Presidential election last year. There was a lot of debate, and the stakes were high. Fortunately for all of us here, it came out the right way. Vernon Jordan was elected president. [*Laughter*] My only regret is Vernon didn't tell me this was lunch. [*Laughter*] I was looking for some warm food.

But it's good to be here; thanks for inviting. I appreciate all of you taking a lead in the economic vitality of this in—city. It's—as a part-time resident, I'm pulling for a good economy and job creation. Most of all, I appreciate the fact that you provide scholarships for graduate students. I think

it's a noble cause to do that. It's impressive that you understand that we have a duty to pay back to society. And the idea of providing scholarships for graduate students who want to study economics and business is a good idea, and I hope you keep doing it.

You know, one of the important things about America is that in a capitalist system people who benefit from the system understand there's an obligation to put something back into the system, an obligation to help people in need. And I want to thank you for leading the way.

I appreciate the board of directors having me here. I appreciate the DC government officials who are here.

I'm going to talk a little bit about the economy. My most important duty as regards the economy is to foster an economic environment that encourages entrepreneurship. Government does not create wealth. The role of Government is to create an environment in which people can feel comfortable risking capital and realizing dreams. That's how I view my role.

I took a step toward that—I took an important step last Monday when I nominated a distinguished economist named Ben Bernanke. Perhaps some of you know him. He's a decent man. He brings impeccable credentials and sound policy judgment and sound character to this vital post. And he will continue the superb leadership that Alan Greenspan has provided at the Fed.

We have got a resilient and strong economy. If you think about what this economy has been through, I think you'll agree with me it's been resilient and strong. In the past 5 years—that happens to be the amount of time I've been here—this economy has been through a stock market bubble. We've been through a recession. We had the attacks of September the 11th. We had corporate scandals. We've had the rising price of energy, and we've had natural disasters. And these were shocks to our system. It required action to make sure America was a good place to risk capital. They forced us to make choices here in Washington. We could have tried to solve problems by raising taxes and dictating solutions from the Nation's Capital. That's not the route I decided to go.

We gave Americans an opportunity to keep more of what they earn and let them decide the best way to save and spend and invest their money. To get our economy moving again, this administration has followed a clear principle: We put our trust in the hard work and good sense of the American people.

And so that's why we cut the taxes. We cut taxes on families by lowering the rates. We cut taxes on the child credit. We reduced the marriage penalty. We cut taxes on dividends and capital gains to encourage investment. We cut taxes on small-business owners who often pay their business taxes at the individual income-tax rate. We created incentives for small businesses to invest in new equipment, expand, and create jobs. And to help our families and our farmers and entrepreneurs pass on the results of a lifetime of hard work to their loved ones, we put the death tax on the road to extinction.

These progrowth policies have worked. Real disposable personal income has grown by nearly $1,900 per capita. Homeownership has reached an alltime high. More minorities own a home today in America than ever before in our Nation's history. Productivity is growing at the fastest rate in nearly 40 years.

Over the past 28 months, America's entrepreneurs and—have created more than 4.2 million new jobs. The unemployment rate is 5.1 percent. That's lower than the average rate of the 1970s, 1980s, and 1990s. These policies have helped us achieve a growth rate of 3.6 percent over the past year, more than 3 times that of Europe and nearly twice that of Japan. The unemployment rate is roughly half of the unemployment rates in Germany and France—I might remind you, countries where workers and businesses face higher taxes, a lot

of regulation, and big Government. When people in these countries look for a place to invest their savings, by the way, they look right here to the United States of America.

Our economic policies have helped create jobs, growth, and opportunity, yet every day brings new and stiff competition for our Nation's workers and businesses. In the coming decades, there's going to be a time of great opportunity if we make the right decisions, if Government doesn't foul it up. So we're moving forward with an agenda to ensure that America is entrepreneurial heaven, the place where people can realize their dreams.

The agenda starts with keeping taxes low and restraining the spending appetite of the Federal Government. Tax relief left more money in the pockets of the people, and that's been a vital part of the growth of our economy. Yet, tax relief is set to expire in the years ahead. We need certainty in the Tax Code. We need to say to our risktakers, "Here's the way the Tax Code is going to look in the years ahead." Therefore, I think it's important that we make the tax relief permanent.

As we provide more incentives for people to work and invest, tax relief has led to faster economic growth, which is translated into faster revenue for the Federal Treasury. This year, thanks to rising revenues and wise fiscal policy, the deficit was $108 billion less than expected. To continue reducing the deficit, we need to keep the taxes low, and we've got to redouble our efforts to be wise about how we spend your money.

Earlier this year, I submitted the most disciplined proposal for nonsecurity discretionary spending since Ronald Reagan was in the White House. My budget proposed an actual cut in spending on nonsecurity discretionary spending. Congress needs to make that cut real. And I'm open to a further across-the-board spending cut as well. My budget has proposed vital reforms in mandatory spending that will save the taxpayers $187 billion over the next decade, part of our plan to cut our deficit in half by 2009.

Some have said that the unprecedented destruction caused by the recent hurricanes means that we've put—got to put our plans to cut the deficit on hold. I disagree. We don't have to do that. We can help the people of the gulf coast region recover and rebuild, and we can be good stewards of the taxpayers' dollars at the same time, which means we're going to have to reduce unnecessary spending elsewhere in the budget. My administration is working with Congress to identify offsets and spending rescissions so we can provide for emergency relief in a fiscally responsible way.

I met with the leader of the House and the Senate today, and we're working on a plan for pushing significant reductions in mandatory and discretionary spending. Both Houses are on progress—making progress toward cuts that'll show the American people we're capable of being wise about the money and at the same time, meet our priorities. I encourage Congress to push the envelope when it comes to cutting spending.

See, believe it or not, up here in Washington, there's a lot of programs that simply don't deliver results. [*Laughter*] And if it doesn't deliver results, we ought to get rid of them. That will help us meet our priorities, winning the war on terror and helping the people down there in Katrina, making sure our kids get educated.

If we keep taxes low and restrain spending, we also have got some other long-term challenges to the economy. This economy of ours, as I mentioned, has shown resilience because it's flexible and responsive. But there are three broad challenges we've got to confront. First is, we all must be concerned about our growing dependence on foreign sources of energy. Our families and businesses are hurting because of higher gasoline prices. It's like a hidden tax on the American people. Gasoline prices

drain the budgets of our families. They run up the cost on the small-business owners.

And the damage inflicted by Hurricanes Katrina and Rita pushed the prices even higher, disrupting oil and natural gas and gasoline production along the gulf coast. These natural disasters have highlighted a problem that Congress needs to pay attention to. It's a problem I've been talking about since I first came to Washington: Our energy supplies are not keeping up with consumption, and that's why people's prices are going up.

Now, I appreciate the work of Congress. I signed a good energy bill this summer. The bill makes an unprecedented commitment to energy conservation and efficiency by promoting new technologies and giving consumers incentives to use energy-saving products. And that was an important title, the energy bill, the conservation title. The bill helps America make cleaner and more productive use of our existing energy resources, like coal and oil and natural gas. And for the sake of energy independence, I know that we can build safe and efficient nuclear powerplants, and this country needs to get after it.

This bill helps diversify our supply by promoting alternative and renewable energy sources such as ethanol and biodiesel. And we're making progress in developing the technologies that'll be able to use corn or soybeans to be the feedstock for energy. I mean, it makes sense, doesn't it? We grow a lot of corn, and we grow a lot of soybeans. I hope one day, the President is sitting in the Oval Office and somebody walks in and says, "Hey, the crops are strong this year. It means we're less dependent on foreign sources of energy."

The bill also helps promote needed investment in our energy infrastructure. It's a good piece of legislation; but it's only a first step. Congress needs to take more steps. We've got to allow environmentally responsible oil exploration in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, if we want to become less dependent on foreign sources of energy. We need to build and expand our refineries. Do you realize we have not built a new refinery since the early 1970s in America? People wonder why the gasoline price goes up. It's because we don't have enough supply. People are conserving more, and that's good. But we need more supply of gasoline, for the sake of our consumers and for the sake of our economy. And so I'm going to work with Congress to pass a bill that makes it easier for current refineries to expand, that encourages the construction of new refineries so that we've got more affordable fuel for the American people.

In the long term, reducing our dependence on foreign oil requires looking beyond fossil fuels. So we're making investments necessary to move from a hydrocarbon economy to a hydrogen economy. In other words, what I'm telling you is, is that investments in technologies are going to allow us to diversify away from the era of oil and gas. In 2003, we launched an aggressive program called the Hydrogen Fuel Initiative. When hydrogen is used in a fuel cell, it can power consumer products from computers to cell phones to cars that emit pure water instead of exhaust fumes. And I appreciate the Congress in dedicating $1.2 billion into hydrogen fuel research. Here's the dream—and I think it's going to happen—that your children—your grandchildren, for some of you—[*laughter*]—children, for the younger—will be able to take their driver's test in an automobile powered by hydrogen.

Secondly, we've got to ensure that we have an education system that prepares a new generation of American workers to fill the jobs of the 21st century. And that starts with making sure we get it right at the elementary schools. I want to thank Members of Congress for working with me on the No Child Left Behind Act. Let me tell you the philosophy behind that. I don't believe you can solve problems unless you measure. If you're running a business, it's

hard to solve problems if you don't measure. And so, inherent in the No Child Left Behind Act is the following philosophy: One, every child can learn, and we want to know if they are learning. You see, a system that doesn't hold people to account basically assumes certain children can't learn, and it's okay just to shuffle them through the school. That's unacceptable in America, as far as I'm concerned.

The No Child Left Behind Act challenges what I've called the soft bigotry of low expectations by raising standards and raising accountability and says to the school districts, "We'll get you money for—particularly your Title I students—but you measure; you measure in the early grades to show us whether or not a child can read and write and add and subtract. And if not, do something about it; change." And we're beginning to see results.

On this year's NAEP test, fourth grade reading scores were six points higher than in the year 2000. That's progress. Fourth grade math scores were the highest in the history of the test. Minority students made progress toward achieving—closing an achievement gap in America, a gap which, by the way, is unacceptable in this country. And there's more work to be done.

I think we ought to extend the same high standards and accountability to our high schools so that when somebody graduates from high school, the diploma means something. Most of the jobs in the 21st century will demand advanced training and technical expertise, as well as retraining over the course of a lifetime. That's why I'm such a strong believer in the community college system.

We've got programs out of the Labor Department that simplifies the job training programs, that diversifies them and that streamlines them from their inadequate bureaucracies. It's unbelievable what—the strings attached to job training money here in Washington, DC, so we're trying to eliminate those strings so the money goes to places that are actually providing a result. I've traveled this country, and I've been to community colleges all over that are doing a fantastic job by giving the people the skills for the jobs which actually exist. And so we're going to continue pursuing a strong job training program in institutions that work and that are capable, that have got curriculum that are flexible and schools that are affordable, and people that are trained—being trained for jobs which are actually existing.

And finally, we've got to make sure more Americans can go to 4-year colleges, and so we've provided more assistance in the form of Pell grants. To make sure that the economic environment in this country is conducive to growth, we've got to make sure our workforce is educated.

Thirdly, we must have a health care system that puts patients in charge of decisions, that offers greater choice, and allows workers to own their own health care. Listen, I understand the rising cost of health care has imposed large costs on your businesses and on our families. But we've begun to make changes here in Washington. I was pleased to sign a bill that confronts costs and creates choice by giving Americans the option of health savings accounts. It's a really innovative product that gives you affordable coverage for major illnesses and allows the worker to save money tax-free for routine medical expenses. It puts the consumer in charge of making health care decisions.

Once you have your HSA, by the way, you can roll over money on a tax-free basis year to year, and you can take it with you from job to job. I strongly urge you to look into HSAs if you're running a business here. Many Americans are already benefiting from the security and—of HSAs. I proposed tax relief for individuals and employers and low-income families to use HSAs, and I hope the Congress responds.

As we make health care more accessible and affordable, we're strengthening the safety net. When I came to office, I

pledged to open or expand 1,200 community health centers to serve an additional 6.1 million people in need of health care. So far, we've opened or expanded more than 800 community health centers. These are cost-effective, smart facilities. It helps the poor and the indigent get much needed primary care. The budget for 2006 provides funding to open or expand more than 500 more community health centers.

We also renewed the promise of Medicare. Medicare is a really important program, obviously. It needed to be reformed. If you're going to have a health care system for the elderly, it seemed like to me the health care system ought to be modern. Do you realize, prior to the reforms that the Congress passed and I proudly signed, Medicare would pay $100,000 for a heart surgery but not a dime for the prescription drugs that would prevent the heart surgery from being needed in the first place? The system was outdated, and it didn't make sense.

And so I worked with Congress for the most significant reform since Medicare was established. Inherent in that bill is not only modernizing the medicine that people get, but it also gives seniors choices. I believe if consumers have more choices, it helps to control cost and enhances the quality of a product someone is able to get.

I also believe that we ought to have what's called association health plans, which will allow small businesses to pool across jurisdictional boundaries, to be able to afford insurance at the same discounts that big businesses get. It's a commonsense way to help small businesses insure people. The bill got out of the House; it's stuck in the Senate. The Senate, if they are concerned about the cost of health care for our small businesses, needs to pass association health plans.

And finally, we're working to expand information technology in the field of medicine. If you've ever looked at the IT part of medicine, you'll be amazed at how backwards it is. I mean, it's easier to get information on buying a car than it is on health care items. And that doesn't make any sense. So we've got a goal to computerize medical records that will help make America's health care more transparent and more efficient, which will help patients make rational choices and help doctors save lives.

To reduce the cost of health care, we've got to do something about medical liability. We've got a problem in America. I've been to States where they have trouble finding an ob-gyn because they're getting—these good docs are getting sued out of business. It just doesn't make any sense to have a medical liability system that's out of control.

When I first came up here—these former Governors will be pleased to hear—I thought that medical liability was mainly a State issue, until I realized that there's tremendous cost to the—to Federal medicine. And after all, we're paying for Medicaid and Medicare and veterans benefits. And when the docs who are getting reimbursed by the Federal Government practice defensive medicine, it runs up the cost to the taxpayers. And when the premiums on their policies go up as a result of these junk lawsuits, it runs up the cost to the taxpayers. I've come to the conclusion that medical liability is a national issue that requires a national response. I got a good bill out of the House. The Senate needs to pass medical liability reform so medicine is available and affordable for the American citizens.

And speaking about tort reform, a part of making sure America is competitive in the world and this is a good place to risk capital, we need more tort reform out of the Congress. We took an important step when we passed class-action reform and bankruptcy reform. I signed a bill today that said if you manufacture a legal product, you shouldn't get sued for it. Now the House and the Senate need meaningful asbestos reform, and they need to get it to my desk as soon as possible.

We also need to confront the long-term problems confronting our entitlements. If

this country wants to stay competitive throughout the 21st century, we have got to do something about Social Security and Medicare. And, as you know, I have brought up the—they told me not to talk about it when I first got up here. [*Laughter*] But I've been talking about it ever since I've been running and—for President and since I've been the President, because I believe the job of a President is to confront problems and not pass them on to future Presidents and future Congresses.

And we've got a problem. It starts with the fact that baby boomers like me are getting ready to retire. It just so happens I turn 62 in the year 2008, which is quite convenient. [*Laughter*] And there's a lot of me. I'm getting—[*laughter*]—a lot of people like me. [*Laughter*] I mean, there are millions and millions of baby boomers relative to the folks that are going to be paying for my retirement and your retirement. The system is going broke. You know, I give a lot of speeches and look out in the audience and see people working hard to pay their payroll taxes, and they're paying payroll taxes into a system that's just not going to be around unless we do something about it.

And so I've made some proposals to the Congress, proposals that work with how fast benefits will go up, proposals that said, "If you're in the—a poor American, nothing is going to change for you. If you're a wealthy American, your benefits will grow, but at a slower rate."

We also have a fantastic opportunity as we strengthen and modernize Social Security to allow younger workers, if they so choose, to put a part—some of their own money in a personal savings account so they can take advantage of the compound rate of interest, a personal savings account they get to call their own, asset base the Government can't take away, an asset base that somebody can pass on to whomever he or she chooses.

Part of our mission has got to be to encourage ownership in America. And one way to spread ownership throughout our society into neighborhoods where some may not own anything, is to allow them to save some of their own money—their choice—in a personal savings account as part of Social Security reform. I'm going to continue to talk to the American people on this issue and insist that Congress do the right thing and work together to save Social Security.

And finally, we've all got to remember we live in a global economy. This country is home to about 5 percent of the world's population, which means 95 percent of potential customers live abroad. Millions of Americans—at least their jobs—depend on exports. And so to keep this economy growing and creating jobs, we've got to continue to open up markets for American products.

When I came to Congress—when I came to office, I asked Congress to grant trade promotion authority. My administration has put that authority to good use. We've completed free trade agreements with 12 nations on 5 continents. We've opened a combined market of 124 million consumers for American products. Earlier this year, we completed a free trade agreement with Central American nations that gives our goods and services the same access in Central America that their goods already get here. In other words, we leveled the playing field. My attitude is, is that our producers and farmers and workers can compete with anybody, anytime, anywhere, so long as the playing field is level.

To continue to open up new markets for goods and services and farm products, we have got to work for a free and fair global trading system. The United States has taken a leadership role in working toward a successful conclusion to the Doha trade negotiations at the World Trade Organization. A successful Doha round will reduce and then eliminate tariffs and other barriers on farm and industrial goods, will phase out unfair agricultural subsidies and open up global markets for services and products and leave all nations better off.

The Doha negotiations are now at a critical point.

Recently, the United States has come forward with a bold proposal in the critical area of agriculture to reenergize the talks. Now other nations must come forward with similarly ambitious proposals. Together we have an historic opportunity to knock down trade barriers and create economic growth and reduce poverty throughout the world. As Presidents from John Kennedy to Ronald Reagan to Bill Clinton have recognized, trade is the most certain path to lasting prosperity for people not only here but around the world. So I'm going to continue to pursue trade agreements on a bilateral, regional, and global level, to open up markets and to maintain our position as a strong economy in the world.

It's important that people in Washington not use trade as a political issue. The objective is to have strong support from Republicans and independents and discerning Democrats, like Vernon Jordan. [*Laughter*] I've been disappointed with how the trade debates have gone in Washington. In the 1990s, many Democrats supported important trade agreements such as NAFTA. Fewer and fewer Democrats today are willing to stand by that position and support trade bills that are good for American workers. It's time to get politics out of trade policy and focus on what's best for the United States of America.

I appreciate you giving me a chance to come by and visit with you about the economy. We'll keep making the decisions necessary to ensure that the entrepreneurial spirit is strong, that the small-business sector can grow, and that people have got a chance to realize their dreams.

We've got a remarkable country, when you think about it. I mean, think about a land where a person can come here from anywhere or grow up in a neighborhood, maybe, where there's no hope, and they have a dream of starting their own business and creating wealth and raising a family and owning a home. It's possible in this country. It's not only possible; it's likely, if you work hard. That's the greatest thing about our country. You know, it's such an honor to travel the world, and it always strikes me about how bright the American future is for people.

And our job in Washington is to keep it bright and to keep it hopeful and keep making decisions that end up encouraging people to work hard and realize their dreams. This economy is strong. It's going to stay strong. And I appreciate you're working to keep it that way.

Thanks for having me. Mr. President, I appreciate the invitation. May God bless you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:02 p.m. at the J.W. Marriott Hotel. In his remarks, he referred to Vernon E. Jordan Jr., president, Economic Club of Washington, DC.

Remarks Following Discussions With Prime Minister Vlado Buckovski of Macedonia

October 26, 2005

President Bush. It's been my honor to welcome the Prime Minister of Macedonia to the Oval Office. Prime Minister, I am grateful for your friendship. I am grateful for the strong support that you've given in our efforts to win the war on terror. You've been a steadfast ally, and the American people are grateful. I also appreciate the fact that you've committed troops alongside our troops in some of the world's

newest democracies, in Afghanistan and Iraq. I want to thank you for that as well.

I also appreciate the progress you've made in implementing the Ohrid Agreement. You've showed the world that it's possible for people of different backgrounds to live together in peace. I want to thank you for your leadership. I also compliment you on the progress you've made toward implementing the reforms necessary for consideration in NATO and the EU. I know this is a big concern to you. I want to thank you for sharing your thoughts with me about your country's desire to join NATO and your aspirations for the EU. I appreciate that very much. Thank you for your confidence.

All in all, I'm impressed by your leadership and welcome you to the Oval Office.

Prime Minister Buckovski. Thank you, Mr. President. I feel be here in the White House with President Bush—and the historic 10th anniversary of the U.S.-Macedonian bilateral relations, which I must say, have never been closer. We have agreed that today Macedonia is a success story in building a stable, multiethnic democracy in the Balkans.

I thanked President Bush for the continued U.S. support of our democracy, specifically for the U.S. role in the implementation of the Ohrid Framework Agreement, and to also express the gratitude of the people of Macedonia for U.S. recognition of our constitutional name, Republic of Macedonia.

And I told the President that we are proud to have our soldiers in Iraq and Afghanistan, and that we intend to stay there as long as it is needed. We highly appreciate the leadership of President Bush—and advancing freedom and democracy throughout the world. We have both emphasized the importance of Macedonia's NATO integration and EU candidacy in cementing our progress and helping the region make the final step on the path of the Europe.

And finally, I told President Bush that Macedonia will continue to play a positive and constructive role in the Balkans, especially now, when Belgrade and Pristina, together, lead the international community, will start negotiation about eventual permanent status of Kosovo.

President Bush. Thank you. Appreciate you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:46 p.m. in the Oval Office at the White House.

Remarks at the White House Conference on Helping America's Youth
October 27, 2005

Thank you all. Thanks for the warm welcome to Laura. Please be seated. Thank you. I am the introducer—[*laughter*]—a rare role for me these days but one I've been looking forward to.

First of all, thank you all for coming. I want to thank Howard University for hosting this important summit. I love to be with the armies of compassion. At my State of the Union last year, I asked Laura to lead an initiative to help young people grow up to be successful adults. And since that State of the Union, she has taken me up on my request, and she has traveled the country to observe and find best practices and programs that are changing people's lives for the better.

And so she called this summit to serve as a catalyst to continue to rally decent, honorable people who are working hard to make sure young Americans have a chance to realize the promise of this country. She is a great leader of this cause, a wonderful

wife, and a wonderful First Lady for our country.

Laura Bush.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:35 a.m. at Howard University. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of the First Lady.

Remarks During a Tour of Areas Damaged by Hurricane Wilma in Pompano Beach, Florida

October 27, 2005

I have come here with the Governor and the mayor of this area because I wanted to thank all the volunteers who've come down to help people in need. And it's—there's an amazing spirit after a disaster, and that spirit is the spirit of people willing to give of their time. I've also come to make sure the Federal response dovetails in with the State efforts. And people here—what I've heard are people concerned about gasoline. A lot of the gasoline—the lines that people are standing in will be alleviated by new ships coming in, and they'll be able to off-load the gasoline and make sure the stations have got fuel. But a lot of the gasoline issues relate to the fact that the electricity is not up and running.

I know people are frustrated because they don't have power on yet, but I've been told by Jeb and others that there are at least 6,000 people from out of State working with the power people here in-State to get people's lines up as quick as possible. In other words, this is a priority. People are working hard to get your electricity back on.

The mayor wanted me to make sure that I told the citizens here that water and ice are moving quite rapidly, and that one of her concerns is generators. And Jeb and I spoke to her about the generators that are being moved from a central location to parts of Florida that need the generating capacity to get their life up and running.

Things don't happen instantly, but things are happening. Right here on this site people are getting fed. Soon, more and more houses will have their electricity back on and life will get back to normal. In the meantime, the Federal Government, working with the State and local governments, are responding as best as we possibly can.

Again, I'm impressed by the deep compassion and care of our fellow citizens. Out of these disasters oftentimes comes some good. And one of the good that comes out of a disaster is it gives people a chance to love a neighbor, to help somebody in need.

So thank you all for giving me a chance to come by.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:45 p.m. In his remarks, he referred to Gov. Jeb Bush of Florida; and Mayor Kristin D. Jacobs of Broward County, FL.

Statement Announcing the Withdrawal of the Nomination of Harriet E. Miers To Be an Associate Justice of the United States Supreme Court
October 27, 2005

Today I have reluctantly accepted Harriet Miers's decision to withdraw her nomination to the Supreme Court of the United States.

I nominated Harriet Miers to the Supreme Court because of her extraordinary legal experience, her character, and her conservative judicial philosophy. Throughout her career, she has gained the respect and admiration of her fellow attorneys. She has earned a reputation for fairness and total integrity. She has been a leader and a pioneer in the American legal profession. She has worked in important positions in State and local government and in the bar. And for the last 5 years, she has served with distinction and honor in critical positions in the executive branch.

I understand and share her concern, however, about the current state of the Supreme Court confirmation process. It is clear that Senators would not be satisfied until they gained access to internal documents concerning advice provided during her tenure at the White House—disclosures that would undermine a President's ability to receive candid counsel. Harriet Miers's decision demonstrates her deep respect for this essential aspect of the Constitutional separation of powers—and confirms my deep respect and admiration for her.

I am grateful for Harriet Miers's friendship and devotion to our country. And I am honored that she will continue to serve our Nation as White House Counsel.

My responsibility to fill this vacancy remains. I will do so in a timely manner.

Statement on the Launch of a Nationwide Effort To Respond to the South Asia Earthquake
October 27, 2005

Five distinguished private-sector leaders have agreed to launch a nationwide effort to encourage private donations for relief and reconstruction in response to the South Asia earthquake that occurred on October 8. These leaders will work with other Americans to raise awareness and resources to help those in need as a result of this disaster.

This private-sector effort will complement the commitment the United States Government has made in terms of funding, relief commodities, and critical military logistical support. In addition, the United States has sent a delegation, headed by USAID Administrator Andrew Natsios, to the United Nations Emergency Donors' Conference for South Asia Earthquake Relief in Geneva.

The business leaders are Jeff Immelt, chairman and CEO of the General Electric Company; Hank McKinnell, Jr., Ph.D., chairman and CEO of Pfizer, Inc.; Sandy Weill, chairman of Citigroup, Inc.; Anne Mulcahy, chairman and CEO of Xerox Corporation; and Jim Kelly, former chairman and CEO of United Parcel Service of America, Inc. In the coming days, they will ask Americans to donate directly to a fund set up to provide help to the earthquake victims.

Message to the Senate Transmitting the Bangladesh-United States Taxation Convention
October 27, 2005

To the Senate of the United States:

I transmit herewith for the advice and consent of the Senate to ratification a Convention Between the Government of the United States of America and the Government of Bangladesh for the Avoidance of Double Taxation and the Prevention of Fiscal Evasion with Respect to Taxes on Income signed at Dhaka on September 26, 2004 (the "Convention"). An exchange of notes is enclosed, and the report of the Department of State with respect to the Convention is transmitted for the information of the Senate.

This Convention, which is similar to tax treaties between the United States and other developing nations, provides maximum rates of tax to be applied to various types of income and protection from double taxation of income. The Convention also provides for the resolution of disputes and sets forth rules making its benefits unavailable to those who are engaged in treaty forum shopping.

I recommend that the Senate give early and favorable consideration to this Convention and that the Senate give its advice and consent to ratification.

GEORGE W. BUSH

The White House,
October 27, 2005.

Message to the Senate Transmitting the United Nations Convention Against Corruption
October 27, 2005

To the Senate of the United States:

With a view to receiving the advice and consent of the Senate to ratification, I transmit herewith the United Nations Convention Against Corruption (the "Corruption Convention"), which was adopted by the United Nations General Assembly on October 31, 2003. I also transmit, for the information of the Senate, the report of the Secretary of State with respect to the Corruption Convention, with an enclosure.

The international fight against corruption is an important foreign policy priority for the United States. Corruption hinders sustainable development, erodes confidence in democratic institutions, and facilitates transnational crime and terrorism. The Convention will be an effective tool to assist in the growing global effort to combat corruption.

The U.N. Corruption Convention is the first global multilateral treaty to comprehensively address the problems relating to corruption. It provides for a broad range of cooperation, including extradition and mutual legal assistance, and commits governments to take measures that will prevent corruption from happening in the first place. The Corruption Convention includes provisions to criminalize and prevent corruption and provides procedures for governments to recover assets that have been illicitly acquired by corrupt officials.

The provisions of the Corruption Convention are explained in the accompanying report of the Department of State. The report also sets forth proposed reservations that would be deposited by the United States with its instrument of ratification. With these reservations, the Convention

will not require implementing legislation for the United States.

I recommend that the Senate give early and favorable consideration to the Corruption Convention and give its advice and consent to its ratification, subject to the reservations, understandings, and declarations described in the accompanying report of the Department of State.

GEORGE W. BUSH

The White House,
October 27, 2005.

Remarks on the War on Terror in Norfolk, Virginia
October 28, 2005

The President. Thank you all. Thank you all very much. Please be seated. Thanks for the warm welcome. Thanks for the chance to get out of Washington. [*Laughter*]

It is great to be here in the Commonwealth of Virginia. You had a lot of history in this part of the world. This part of the country was home to the first English-speaking colony on the continent, birthplace of representative government in America, and the site of George Washington's victory in the Revolutionary War. I call him the first George W. [*Laughter*]

In the 21st century, the tradition of patriotism and freedom still runs strong here in the Hampton Roads. I know there's a lot of folks here in our military who live here, and I know there's a lot of veterans live here. So the first thing I want to say is to those who wear the uniform: This country is with you, and the Commander in Chief is incredibly proud of you. And to the veterans: Thanks for setting such a good example. I'm proud of your service.

Dee, thanks for the introduction, and thanks for the invitation. I want to thank Jack Hornbeck as well. I appreciate so very much the Senator from the great State—or the Commonwealth of Virginia, is here, George Allen. Thanks for coming, George. And Congresswoman Thelma Drake is with us. Thanks for coming. I appreciate you being here, honored you're here.

Mayor, thanks for coming. I appreciate Mayor Fraim. He's here from the city of Norfolk. He's a—the only thing I told him is—he didn't ask for my advice, but I gave it anyway—I said, "Fill the potholes." [*Laughter*] Thanks for serving. I appreciate your serving, Mayor. Thanks for greeting me today. I want to thank all the local and State officials who've joined us.

I want to thank the military commanders who are here: Lieutenant General Anthony Jones and Lieutenant General Mark Curran, Lieutenant General Bob Wagner, Major General Jim Soligan. Thank you all for being here. John McCarthy, Major General McCarthy of the Marine Corps, Rear Admiral John Acton, Rear Admiral Steve Turcotte, I'm honored you all took time to come.

I appreciate the foreign officers here. I appreciate you being here. I appreciate the jointness that we're working on and the transformation they're working on together to make sure that we're able to keep the peace. This is an important mission. I want to thank Admiral Sir Mark Stanhope. He's the Deputy Supreme Allied Commander of Transformation, in the United Kingdom's Royal Navy. I appreciate Lieutenant General Michel Maisonneuve. She's [He's] * in the Canadian Air Force. She's [He's] * NATO Headquarters Supreme Allied Commander Transformation Chief of Staff.

* White House correction.

Thank you all for being here. Thanks for being such strong allies in the cause of peace.

I appreciate the vibrancy of the community in which you live. This is a good place to live. It's a good place to find work. It's a good place to realize your dreams. It's a place where people understand that in order to make sure that our society stays vibrant and people can realize their dreams, we got to face squarely the threats that our Nation deals with. People here, I think, understand this fact, that America is engaged in the first war of the 21st century and that the stakes could not be higher.

On the morning of September the 11th, 2001, we saw the destruction that the terrorists intend for this Nation. We know they want to strike again. And our Nation has made a clear choice: We will confront this mortal danger to all humanity. And we will not tire, and we will not rest until the war on terror is won.

In the 4 years since September the 11th, the evil that reached our shores has reappeared on other days, in other places—in Mombasa and Casablanca and Riyadh and Jakarta and Istanbul and Madrid, in Beslan and Taba and Netanya and Baghdad and elsewhere. In the past few months, we have seen a new terror offensive with attacks on London and Sharm el-Sheikh and a deadly bombing in Bali once again.

Audience member. Mr. President, war is terror.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. All these separate images of destruction and suffering that we see on the news can seem like random and isolated acts of madness. Innocent men, women, and children have died simply because they boarded the wrong train or worked in the wrong building. They have died because they checked into the wrong hotel. Yet while the killers choose their victims indiscriminately, their attacks serve a clear and focused ideology, a set of beliefs and goals that are evil but not insane.

Some call this evil Islamic radicalism; others, militant jihadism; and still others, Islamo-fascism. Whatever it's called, this ideology is very different from the religion of Islam. This form of radicalism exploits Islam to serve a violent and political vision, the establishment—by terrorism, subversion, and insurgency—of a totalitarian empire that denies all political and religious freedom. These extremists distort the idea of jihad into a call for terrorist murder against Christians and Hindus and Jews and also against Muslims who do not share their radical vision, whom they regard as heretics.

Many militants are part of a global, borderless terrorist organizations like Al Qaida, which spreads propaganda and provides financing and technical assistance to local extremists and conducts dramatic and brutal operations like the attacks of September the 11th. Other militants are found in regional groups, often associated with Al Qaida, paramilitary insurgencies and separatist movements in places like Somalia, the Philippines, and Pakistan and Chechnya and Kashmir and Algeria. Still others spring up in local cells, inspired by Islamic radicalism but not centrally controlled or directed. Islamic radicalism is more like a loose network with military branches than an army under a single command. Yet these operatives, fighting on scattered battlefields, share a similar ideology and vision for our world.

We know the vision of the radicals because they have openly stated it in videos, in audiotapes, and letters and declarations and web sites. First, these extremists want to end American and Western influence in the broader Middle East, because we stand for democracy and peace and we stand in the way of their ambitions. Al Qaida's leader, Usama bin Laden, has called on Muslims to dedicate, their "resources, sons, and money to driving the infidels out of their lands." The tactics of Al Qaida and other Islamic extremists have been consistent for

a quarter-century: They hit us, and they expect us to run.

Earlier this month, the world learned of a letter written by Al Qaida's number-two leader, a man named Zawahiri. He wrote this letter to his chief deputy in Iraq, the terrorist Zarqawi. In it, Zawahiri points to the Vietnam war as a model for Al Qaida. Zawahiri writes, "The aftermath of the collapse of American power in Vietnam and how they ran and left their agents is noteworthy." The terrorists witnessed a similar response after the attacks on American troops in Beirut in 1983 and Mogadishu in 1993. They believe that America can be made to run again, only this time on a larger scale with greater consequences.

Second, the militant network wants to use the vacuum created by an American retreat to gain control of a country, a base from which to launch attacks and to conduct their war against nonradical Muslim governments. Over the past few decades, radicals have specifically targeted Egypt and Saudi Arabia and Pakistan and Jordan for potential takeover. They achieved their goal, for a time, in Afghanistan, and now they have set their sights on Iraq. In his recent letter, Zawahiri writes that Al Qaida views Iraq as, "the place for the greatest battle." The terrorists regard Iraq as the central front in their war against humanity, and we must recognize Iraq as the central front in our war against terror.

Third, these militants believe that controlling one country will rally the Muslim masses, enabling them to overthrow all moderate governments in the region and establish a radical Islamic empire that spans from Spain to Indonesia. Zawahiri writes that the terrorists, quote, "must not have their mission end with the expulsion of Americans from Iraq." He goes on to say, "The jihad . . . requires several incremental goals . . . . Expel the Americans from Iraq . . . . Establish an Islamic authority over as much territory as you can to spread its power in Iraq . . . . Extend the jihad wave to the secular countries neighboring Iraq." With the greater economic, military, and political power they seek, the terrorists would be able to achieve their stated agenda, to develop weapons of mass destruction, to destroy Israel, to intimidate Europe, to assault the American people, and to blackmail our Government into isolation.

Some might be tempted to dismiss these goals as fanatical or extreme. They are fanatical and extreme, but they should not be dismissed. Our enemy is utterly committed. As Zawahiri [Zarqawi] * has vowed, "We will either achieve victory over the human race, or we will pass to the eternal life." And the civilized world knows very well that other fanatics in history, from Hitler to Stalin to Pol Pot, consumed whole nations in war and genocide before leaving the stage of history. Evil men, obsessed with ambition and unburdened by conscience, must be taken very seriously—and we must stop them before their crimes can multiply.

Defeating the militant network is difficult, because it thrives like a parasite on the suffering and frustration of others. The radicals exploit local conflicts to build a culture of victimization in which someone else is always to blame and violence is always the solution. They exploit resentful and disillusioned young men and women, recruiting them through radical mosques as pawns of terror. And they exploit modern technology to multiply their destructive power. Instead of attending faraway training camps, recruits can now access online training libraries to learn how to build a roadside bomb or fire a rocket-propelled grenade, and this further spreads the threat of violence, even within peaceful democratic societies.

The influence of Islamic radicalism is also magnified by helpers and enablers. They have been sheltered by authoritarian regimes, allies of convenience like Syria and Iran, that share the goal of hurting America

* White House correction.

and modern Muslim governments and that use terrorist propaganda to blame their own failures on the West, on America, and on the Jews. The radicals depend on front operations, such as corrupted charities, which direct money to terrorist activity. They are strengthened by those who aggressively fund the spread of radical and intolerant versions of Islam in unstable parts of the world. The militants are aided as well by elements of the Arab news media that incite hatred and anti-Semitism, that feed conspiracy theories and speak of a so-called American "war on Islam," with seldom a word about American action to protect Muslims in Afghanistan and Bosnia and Somalia and Kosovo and Kuwait and Iraq and with seldom a word about our generous assistance to Muslims recovering from natural disasters in places like Indonesia and Pakistan.

Some have also argued that extremism has been strengthened by the actions of our coalition in Iraq, claiming that our presence in that country has somehow caused or triggered the rage of radicals. I would remind them that we were not in Iraq on September the 11th, 2001, and Al Qaida attacked us anyway. The hatred of the radicals existed before Iraq was an issue, and it will exist after Iraq is no longer an excuse. The Government of Russia did not support Operation Iraqi Freedom, and yet the militants killed more than 150 Russian schoolchildren in Beslan.

Over the years, these extremists have used a litany of excuses for violence: The Israeli presence on the West Bank or the U.S. presence in Saudi Arabia or the defeat of the Taliban or the Crusades of a thousand years ago.

In fact, we're not facing a set of grievances that can be soothed and addressed. We're facing a radical ideology with inalterable objectives, to enslave whole nations and intimidate the world. No act of ours invited the rage of killers, and no consequence, bribe, or act of appeasement would change or limit their plans of murder.

On the contrary, they target nations whose behavior they believe they can change through violence. Against such an enemy, there is only one effective response. We will never back down; we will never give in; and we will never accept anything less than complete victory.

The murderous ideology of the Islamic radicals is the great challenge of our new century. Yet in many ways, this fight resembles the struggle against communism in the last century. Like the ideology of communism, Islamic radicalism is elitist, led by a self-appointed vanguard that presumes to speak for the Muslim masses. Bin Laden says his own role is to tell Muslims, "what is good for them and what is not." And what this man who grew up in wealth and privilege considers good for poor Muslims is that they become killers and suicide bombers. He assures them that this is the road to paradise, though he never offers to go along for the ride. [*Laughter*]

Like the ideology of communism, our new enemy teaches that innocent individuals can be sacrificed to serve a political vision. And this explains their coldblooded contempt for human life. We have seen it in the murders of Daniel Pearl, Nicholas Berg, and Margaret Hassan and many others. In a courtroom in the Netherlands, the killer of Theo van Gogh turned to the victim's grieving mother and said, "I don't feel your pain, because I believe you are an infidel." And in spite of this veneer of religious rhetoric, most of the victims claimed by the militants are fellow Muslims.

In an Al Qaida attack on two Baghdad hotels this week, the targets were journalists and innocent Iraqis. When unsuspecting hotel guests are blown up in their rooms or 25 Iraqi children are killed in a bombing or Iraqi teachers are executed at their school or hospital workers are killed caring for the wounded, this is murder,

pure and simple—the total rejection of justice and honor and morality and religion. These militants are not just the enemies of America or the enemies of Iraq; they are the enemies of Islam and the enemies of humanity. And we have seen this kind of shameless cruelty before in the heartless zealotry that led to the gulags, the Cultural Revolution, and the Killing Fields.

Like the ideology of communism, our new enemy pursues totalitarian aims. Its leaders pretend to be an aggrieved party, representing the powerless against imperial enemies. In truth, they have endless ambitions of imperial domination, and they wish to make everyone powerless except themselves. Under their rule, they have banned books and desecrated historical monuments and brutalized women. They seek to end dissent in every form, to control every aspect of life, and to rule the soul itself. While promising a future of justice and holiness, the terrorists are preparing a future of oppression and misery.

Like the ideology of communism, our new enemy is dismissive of free peoples, claiming that men and women who live in liberty are weak and decadent. Zarqawi has said that Americans are, and I quote, "the most cowardly of God's creatures." But let us be clear. It is cowardice that seeks to kill children and the elderly with car bombs and cuts the throat of a bound captive and targets worshipers leaving a mosque. It is courage that liberated more than 50 million people from tyranny. It is courage that keeps an untiring vigil against the enemies of a rising democracy. And it is courage in the cause of freedom that will once again destroy the enemies of freedom.

And Islamic radicalism, like the ideology of communism, contains inherent contradictions that doom it to failure. By fearing freedom—by distrusting human creativity and punishing change and limiting the contributions of half of the population, this ideology undermines the very qualities that make human progress possible and human societies successful. The only thing modern about the militants' vision is the weapons they want to use against us. The rest of their grim vision is defined by a warped image of the past, a declaration of war on the idea of progress itself. And whatever lies ahead in the war against this ideology, the outcome is not in doubt: Those who despise freedom and progress have condemned themselves to isolation, decline, and collapse. Because free peoples believe in the future, free peoples will own the future.

We didn't ask for this global struggle, but we are answering history's call with confidence and a comprehensive strategy. Defeating a broad and adaptive network requires patience and constant pressure and strong partners in Europe, in the Middle East, and North Africa and Asia and beyond. Working with these partners, we are disrupting militant conspiracies, destroying their ability to make war, and are working to give millions in a troubled region of the world a hopeful alternative to resentment and violence.

First, we're determined to prevent the attacks of terrorist networks before they occur. We are reorganizing the Government to give this Nation a broad and coordinated homeland defense. We are reforming our intelligence agencies for the incredibly difficult task of tracking enemy activity, based on information that often comes in small fragments from widely scattered sources, both here and abroad. And we're acting, along with governments from many countries, to destroy the terrorist networks and incapacitate their leaders.

Together with our coalition partners, we have disrupted a number of serious Al Qaida plots since September the 11th, including several Al Qaida plots to attack inside the United States. Our coalition against terror has killed or captured nearly all those directly responsible for the September the 11th attacks. We've killed or captured most of bin Laden's senior deputies: Al Qaida's managers and operatives in more than 24

countries; the mastermind of the USS *Cole* bombing, who was the chief Al Qaida operations—chief of Al Qaida operations in the Persian Gulf; we captured the mastermind of the bombings in Jakarta and Bali; a senior Zarqawi terrorist planner, who was planning attacks in Turkey; and many of Al Qaida's senior leaders in Saudi Arabia. Because of this steady progress, the enemy is wounded, but the enemy is still capable of global operations. Our commitment is clear: We will not relent until the organized international terror networks are exposed and broken and until their leaders are held to account for their murder.

Secondly, we're determined to deny weapons of mass destruction to outlaw regimes and to their terrorist allies, who would use them without hesitation. The United States, working with Great Britain and Pakistan and other nations, has exposed and disrupted a major black-market operation in nuclear technology led by A.Q. Khan. Libya has abandoned its chemical and nuclear weapons programs as well as its long-range ballistic missiles. And in the last year, America and our partners in the Proliferation Security Initiative have stopped more than a dozen shipments of suspected weapons technology, including equipment for Iran's ballistic missile program. This progress has reduced the danger to free nations, but it has not removed it. Evil men who want to use horrendous weapons against us are working in deadly earnest to gain them. And we are working urgently to keep weapons of mass murder out of the hands of the fanatics.

Third, we're determined to deny radical groups the support and sanctuary of outlaw regimes. State sponsors like Syria and Iran have a long history of collaboration with terrorists, and they deserve no patience from the victims of terror. The United States makes no distinction between those who commit acts of terror and those who support and harbor them, because they are equally guilty of murder.

Fourth, we're determined to deny the militants control of any nation which they would use as a home base and a launching pad for terror. This mission has brought new and urgent responsibilities to our Armed Forces and to all of you. American troops are fighting beside Afghan partners with remnants of the Taliban and their Al Qaida allies. We are working with President Musharraf to oppose and isolate the militants in Pakistan. We're fighting the regime remnants and terrorists in Iraq. The terrorist goal is to overthrow a rising democracy, claim a strategic country as a haven for terror, destabilize the Middle East, and strike America and free nations with ever-increasing violence. That's their goal. Our goal is to defeat the terrorists and their allies at the heart of their power, so we will defeat the enemy in Iraq.

Our coalition, along with our Iraqi allies, is moving forward with a comprehensive plan. As Secretary Rice explained last week, our strategy is to clear, hold, and build. We are working to clear areas from terrorist control, to hold those areas securely, and to build lasting and democratic Iraqi institutions. In recent weeks, American and Iraqi troops have conducted several major assaults to clear out enemy fighters in western Iraq and to help shut down terrorist entry routes from Syria. During one raid, our forces killed a Zarqawi henchman named Abu Abdullah, who was responsible for attacks on American troops and innocent Iraqis. We also killed a terrorist named Abu Dua, who had been helping terrorists enter Iraq from Syria. Thousands of Iraqi forces have been participating in our operations, and many have remained in the cities along with coalition forces to hold onto our gains and prevent the enemy from returning. Iraqi forces are using their local expertise to maintain security and make tangible improvements in the lives of their fellow Iraqis.

At the same time, Iraqis are making inspiring progress toward building a lasting democracy. Earlier this month, millions of

Iraqis turned out to vote on a constitution that guarantees fundamental freedoms and lays the foundation for lasting democracy. And this week, the Iraqi elections commission certified passage of that constitution. Many more Sunnis participated in this vote than in January's historic elections, and the level of violence was dramatically lower. With their courageous vote, the Iraqis have once again proved their determination to build a democracy united against extremism and violence. An 85-year-old Iraqi woman cast a ballot in favor of the constitution after her son carried her to the polls on his back. And here's what she said, "I went out to vote for it because I want the future to be safe and peaceful for my sons and my grandchildren."

The work ahead involves great risk for Iraqis and for American and coalition forces. We have lost some of the Nation's finest men and women in the war on terror. Each of these men and women left grieving families and left loved ones back home. Each of these patriots left a legacy that will allow generations of their fellow Americans to enjoy the blessings of liberty. Each loss is heartbreaking. And the best way to honor the sacrifices of our fallen troops is to complete the mission and lay the foundation of peace by spreading freedom.

Wars are not won without sacrifice, and this war will require more sacrifice, more time, and more resolve. The terrorists are as brutal an enemy as we have ever faced, unconstrained by any notion of common humanity or by the rules of warfare. No one should underestimate the difficulties ahead, nor should they overlook the advantages we bring to this fight.

Some observers look at the job ahead and adopt a self-defeating pessimism. It is not justified. With every random bombing and with every funeral of a child, it becomes more clear that the extremists are not patriots or resistance fighters; they are murderers at war with the Iraqi people themselves. In contrast, the elected leaders of Iraq are proving to be strong and steadfast. By any standard or precedent of history, Iraq has made incredible political progress from tyranny to liberation, to national elections, to the ratification of a constitution—in the space of 2½ years. And with our help, the Iraqi military is gaining new capabilities and new confidence with every passing month. At the time of our Fallujah operations nearly a year ago, there were only a few Iraqi army battalions in combat. Today there are nearly 90 Iraqi army battalions fighting the terrorists alongside our forces. General David Petraeus says, "Iraqis are in the fight. They are fighting and dying for their country, and they are fighting increasingly well," he says. The progress isn't easy, but it is steady. And no fair-minded person should ignore or deny or dismiss the achievements of the Iraqi people.

Some observers question the durability of democracy in Iraq. They underestimate the power and appeal of freedom. We've heard it suggested that Iraq's democracy must be on shaky ground because Iraqis are arguing with each other. [*Laughter*] But that's the essence of democracy: You make your case; you debate with those you disagree with; you build a consensus by persuasion; and you answer to the will of the people. We've heard it said that the Shi'a, the Sunnis, and the Kurds of Iraq are too divided to form a lasting democracy. In fact, democratic federalism is the best hope for unifying a diverse population because a federal constitutional system respects the rights and religious traditions of all citizens, while giving all minorities, including the Sunnis, a stake and a voice in the future of their country. It is true that the seeds of freedom have only recently been planted in Iraq, but democracy, when it grows, is not a fragile flower. It's a healthy, sturdy tree. As Americans, we believe that people everywhere prefer freedom to slavery and that liberty, once chosen, improves the lives

of all. And so we're confident, as our coalition and the Iraqi people each do their part, Iraqi democracy will succeed.

Some observers also claim that America would be better off by cutting our losses and leaving Iraq now. This is a dangerous illusion, refuted with a simple question: Would the United States and other free nations be more safe or less safe with Zarqawi and bin Laden in control of Iraq, its people, and its resources? Having removed a dictator who hated free peoples, we will not stand by as a new set of killers, dedicated to the destruction of our country, seizes control of Iraq by violence.

There is always a temptation, in the middle of a long struggle, to seek the quiet life, to escape the duties and problems in the world, and to hope the enemy grows weary of fanaticism and tired of murder. That would be a pleasant world, but it's not the world we live in. The enemy is never tired, never sated, never content with yesterday's brutality. This enemy considers every retreat of the civilized world as an invitation to greater violence. In Iraq, there is no peace without victory, and so we will keep our nerve and win that victory.

The fifth element of our strategy in the war on terror is to deny the militants future recruits by replacing hatred and resentment with democracy and hope across the broader Middle East. This is a difficult and long-term project, yet there is no alternative to it. Our future and the future of that region are linked. If the broader Middle East is left to grow in bitterness, if countries remain in misery, while radicals stir the resentments of millions, then that part of the world will be a source of endless conflict and mounting danger, in our generation and for the next. If the peoples of that region are permitted to choose their own destiny and advance by their own energy and participation as free men and women, then the extremists will be marginalized, and the flow of violent radicalism to the rest of the world will slow and eventually end. By standing for the hope and freedom of others, we make our own freedom more secure.

America is making this stand in practical ways. We are encouraging our friends in the Middle East, including Egypt and Saudi Arabia, to take the path of reform, to strengthen their own societies in the fight against terror by respecting the rights and choices of their people. We are standing with dissidents and exiles against oppressive regimes, because we know that the dissidents of today will be the democratic leaders of tomorrow. We are making our case through public diplomacy, stating clearly and confidently our belief in self-determination and the rule of law and religious freedom and equal rights for women, beliefs that are right and true in every land and in every culture.

And as we do our part to confront radicalism, we know that the most vital work will be done within the Islamic world itself. And this work has begun. Many Muslim scholars have publicly condemned terrorism, often citing Chapter 5, Verse 32 of the Koran, which states that killing an innocent human being is like killing all of humanity, and saving the life of one person is like saving all of humanity. After the attacks in London on July the 7th, an imam in the United Arab Emirates declared, "Whoever does such a thing is not a Muslim nor a religious person." The time has come for all responsible Islamic leaders to join in denouncing an ideology that exploits Islam for political ends and defiles a noble faith.

Many people of the Muslim faith are proving their commitment at great personal risk. Everywhere we have engaged the fight against extremism, Muslim allies have stood up and joined the fight, becoming partners in a vital cause. Afghan troops are in combat against Taliban remnants. Iraqi soldiers are sacrificing to defeat Al Qaida in their own country. These brave citizens know the stakes: The survival of their own liberty, the future of their own region, the justice

and humanity of their own tradition, and we are proud to stand beside them.

With the rise of a deadly enemy and the unfolding of a global ideological struggle, our time in history will be remembered for new challenges and unprecedented dangers. And yet the fight we have joined is also the current expression of an ancient struggle between those who put their faith in dictators and those who put their faith in the people. Throughout history, tyrants and would-be tyrants have always claimed that murder is justified to serve their grand vision, and they end up alienating decent people across the globe. Tyrants and would-be tyrants have always claimed that regimented societies are strong and pure, until those societies collapse in corruption and decay. And tyrants and would-be tyrants have always claimed that free men and women are weak and decadent, until the day that free men and women defeat them.

We don't know the course of our own struggle, where it will take us, or the sacrifices that might lie ahead. But we do know, however, that the defense of freedom is worth our sacrifice. We do know the love of freedom is the mightiest force of history. And we do know the cause of freedom will once again prevail.

Thank you for having me. May God bless you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:07 a.m. at Chrysler Hall. In his remarks, he referred to D. R. "Dee" Carpenter III, chair, and John A. "Jack" Hornbeck, Jr., president and chief executive officer, Hampton Roads Chamber of Commerce; Mayor Paul D. Fraim of Norfolk, VA; Lt. Gen. Anthony R. Jones, USA, deputy commanding general and chief of staff, and Lt. Gen. John M. "Mark" Curran, USA, deputy commanding general, Futures, and director, Futures Center, United States Army Training and Doctrine Command; Lt. Gen. Robert W. Wagner, USA, acting commander, and Maj. Gen. James N. Soligan, USAF, chief of staff, United States Joint Forces Command; Maj. Gen. John J. McCarthy, USMC, deputy commander, Marine Forces Atlantic, Marine Forces South, and Marine Forces Europe; Rear Adm. John C. Acton, USCG, deputy area commander, Mobilization and Reserve Affairs, Atlantic Area; Rear Adm. Stephen A. Turcotte, USN, commander, Navy Region Mid-Atlantic; Lt. Gen. J.O. Michel Maisonneuve, Canadian Army, chief of staff to the Supreme Allied Commander, Transformation, North Atlantic Treaty Organization; Ayman Al-Zawahiri, founder of the Egyptian Islamic Jihad and senior Al Qaida associate; senior Al Qaida associate Abu Musab Al Zarqawi; Mohammed Bouyeri, who was convicted of the November 2, 2004, murder of film director Theo van Gogh; Anneke van Gogh, mother of Theo van Gogh; Abd al-Rahim al-Nashiri, Al Qaida's chief of operations for the Persian Gulf; Nurjaman Riduan Isamuddin (also known as Hambali), Al Qaida's chief operational planner in Southeast Asia; A.Q. Khan, former head of Pakistan's nuclear weapons program; President Pervez Musharraf of Pakistan; Lt. Gen. David H. Petraeus, USA, former commander, Multi-National Security Transition Command—Iraq; and former President Saddam Hussein of Iraq.

Remarks on the 40th Anniversary of the President's Commission on White House Fellows

October 28, 2005

Thanks for coming. Welcome to the White House. I understand you had a guest speaker at lunch. [*Laughter*] You probably wish she was back. [*Laughter*] I'm honored

to be here, thanks to—as we celebrate the 40th anniversary of the White House Fellows program.

I agreed to do this because I'm a big believer in the White House Fellows program. I think it is important, and I think it is a program that, when you analyze the results, you'll say, this is—it's made a difference in the life of our country. So I want to thank you all for coming. It's an honor to share this celebration with you. I view the White House Fellows program as an investment in the future of our country.

I've kind of taken advantage of the White House Fellows program. I've managed to find a few White House Fellows to serve in my Government, starting with the Secretary of Labor, Elaine Chao. Thank you for being here, Madam Secretary. And Colin Powell, who will be honored tonight with the John W. Gardner Legacy of Leadership Award. Well deserved, I might add. [*Laughter*]

I also appreciate the Administrator of the EPA for joining us. Thanks for coming, Steve Johnson.

I just said, thanks, to the President's Commission on White House Fellows. I guess you all are the deciders who get to be White House Fellows? And thanks for serving. It's a—it is an appointment I take very seriously. I appreciate you doing it. And I want to thank the chairman, Julie Nixon Eisenhower, for being the chairman of the Commission. And this is probably familiar territory to you here, isn't it? [*Laughter*] And I thank Janet Eissenstat, the director for the White House program. Thank you all. I'm also honored that Barbara Anderson has joined us, the president of the White House Fellows Alumni Association. And mostly, thank you all for coming.

The program began with a good idea. It was: Let's choose a handful of outstanding young leaders and bring them to Washington, DC, and put them to work at the highest levels of the executive branch and see what happens." [*Laughter*] I was pleased to learn this was the vision of John Gardner. He outlined the vision in a memo in 1957. But it was implemented by Lyndon Baines Johnson, my fellow Texan. [*Laughter*]

I don't know if any of the class—the first class of the White House Fellows are here. Is somebody here from—you guys don't look old enough. [*Laughter*] Welcome. Glad you're here.

If I had to just write the program, here's what I'd say would be the goals of the program. First, to show people how Government works so as to inspire people to become involved in Government. That's what I would say. I'd say, try to get people who have got talents and brains and desire and ambition and expose them to Government—trying to recruit people to participate in Government—at any level, whether it be the Federal Government or the school board. That's what I would hope the program would do.

Secondly, I would hope the program would teach somebody how to make decisions and how to manage organizations. If a White House Fellow hangs around the White House, he'll see decisionmaking. If a White House Fellow is involved in the Cabinet, they'll see decisionmaking in management. They'll see all kinds of things. And I would hope people would learn that in order to make decisions, you got to make decisions on principle. You can't be kind of just figuring it out as time goes on, you have to stand for something, no matter what the polls or focus groups may say. You make good decisions by believing something and not trying to find yourself in the midst of the decisionmaking process, I guess. And in order to lead, you've got to set clear goals that everybody can understand and then not be afraid to hold people account as to whether those goals have been met.

And thirdly, I would hope the White House Fellowship program takes really smart, bright, capable people and makes

them understand that there's always a new horizon, that one should never be complacent if you've been given a lot of God-given talents, that you've got to keep striving for the best.

That's how I see the White House program. I mean, it's working. And the reason I know is I get to—first of all, I know people who have graduated from the program, and you've gone on to great success. You've taken your talents, and you've succeeded, and you've made a difference in your communities. And I want to thank you for that. That's important. The truth of the matter is, this country is really strong and vibrant because people reach out to succeed, people—ambition is, it seems like in America, is something that oftentimes lead to a better tomorrow.

I particularly think about those who go back to their communities and realize that to whom much has been given, much is required and become involved in saving people's lives through compassion and changing America as a result of putting your arm around somebody who hurts and says, "How can I help? What can I do to make a difference in your life?" It's kind of the—I view the White House Fellows as part of the de Tocqueville vision, what de Tocqueville saw about America. It's individuals of talent joining together to serve a cause greater than yourself and your communities.

One of my favorite activities as the President is to meet with the White House Fellows. I see a couple of my biking buddies back there. [*Laughter*] Sweet Lou. [*Laughter*] Get back to work, Lou. I don't know what you're doing here, Lou. [*Laughter*]

I love to sit down with the Fellows and talk about—and answer their questions, is really what it's like. And it's an inspiring experience for me. The questions are always good and right on target, and it's—I learned as much—probably more from them than they do from me.

And so one time, one of the guys said, "How do you—how can you handle all this business, and what do you do?" And I said, "Well, one of the things, I like to exercise. I like to stay fit as part of a daily routine." He said, "What do you do?" I said, "Well, I ride mountain bikes." And Lou happened to be the captain of the Stanford mountain bike—regular bike time, but felt like he was strong enough to ride with a 59-year-old. [*Laughter*] And it turns out, he was strong enough to ride. [*Laughter*]

At any rate, it's been fun. He's a part of Peleton One, and—as was Lauren. I'm not going to tell them about the other bikers that didn't quite it make from your class, Lou—[*laughter*]—but I really enjoy it. I got a chance to see the caliber and the quality of the people who come to Washington, DC, to serve, and I am impressed by the program.

I guess what I'm telling you is, thanks for being a part of it; thanks for seeing to it that the program continues on. I appreciate you helping to find people to come to Washington, DC, to be a Fellow. I want to thank you for setting a good example for others in the community in which you live. And thank you for allowing me to come by and celebrate the 40th Anniversary of the White House Fellows.

Finally, may God bless you all, and may God bless our country.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:44 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to the First Lady, who spoke to the Commission earlier in the day; and Louis O'Neill and Lauren Zucker, White House Fellows 2004–05.

Remarks on the Resignation of the Vice President's Chief of Staff I. Lewis Libby
October 28, 2005

Today I accepted the resignation of Scooter Libby. Scooter has worked tirelessly on behalf of the American people and sacrificed much in the service to this country. He served the Vice President and me through extraordinary times in our Nation's history.

Special Counsel Fitzgerald's investigation and ongoing legal proceedings are serious, and now the proceedings—the process moves into a new phase. In our system, each individual is presumed innocent and entitled to due process and a fair trial.

While we're all saddened by today's news, we remain wholly focused on the many issues and opportunities facing this country. I've got a job to do and so do the people who work in the White House. We've got a job to protect the American people, and that's what we'll continue working hard to do.

I look forward to working with Congress on policies to keep this economy moving. And pretty soon, I'll be naming somebody to the Supreme Court.

Thank you all very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:51 p.m. on the South Lawn at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Patrick J. Fitzgerald, U.S. Attorney for the Northern District of Illinois, and Department of Justice CIA leak investigation Special Prosecutor.

Letter to the Speaker of the House of Representatives Transmitting a Request To Reallocate Emergency Funds for Further Response and Recovery Efforts in the Regions Affected by Hurricane Katrina
October 28, 2005

Dear Mr. Speaker:

The devastation wrought by Hurricane Katrina across the Gulf Coast States has required an unprecedented response by Federal, State, and local governments, as well as the private sector. To date, I have signed into law two supplemental appropriations bills totaling $62.3 billion for hurricane-related disaster relief.

To further assist the region in its continued recovery in a fiscally responsible way, I ask the Congress to consider the enclosed reallocation request to provide $17.1 billion in emergency funds for further response and recovery efforts, by reallocating available funding from the Federal Emergency Management Agency's Disaster Relief Fund. I hereby designate this proposal in the amount requested herein as an emergency requirement. This request will provide further assistance to meet the needs of victims, continue the rebuilding and repair of the region's infrastructure, and accelerate the return of Federal agencies to facilities in the region.

To further efforts to offset the unprecedented cost of this disaster and control the growth in discretionary spending, I also will be sending you a separate rescissions proposal reducing funding for lower-priority programs and eliminating excess funds. By holding 2006 nonsecurity discretionary spending below a freeze and achieving additional savings through reconciliation legislation, we will advance our efforts to maintain fiscal discipline while continuing to

provide for the needs of hurricane-affected States.

I urge the Congress to act expeditiously on this request to ensure that the Federal response to these disasters continues uninterrupted.

The details of this request are set forth in the enclosed letter from the Director of the Office of Management and Budget.

Sincerely,

GEORGE W. BUSH

Letter to the Speaker of the House of Representatives Transmitting Proposed Budget Rescissions
October 28, 2005

Dear Mr. Speaker:

Today, in a separate message, I have asked the Congress to reallocate $17.1 billion of available funding in the Federal Emergency Management Agency's Disaster Relief Fund to provide for further response and recovery efforts in the regions affected by Hurricane Katrina.

As a further measure to ensure fiscal responsibility as we continue our unprecedented response to Hurricane Katrina, I ask the Congress to consider the enclosed request to rescind $2.3 billion from lower-priority Federal programs and excess funds.

As we help the people of the Gulf Coast region recover and rebuild from Hurricane Katrina, it is more important than ever to redouble our efforts to reduce unnecessary spending elsewhere in the budget.

In concert with this rescission proposal, I urge the Congress to reduce Fiscal Year 2006 nonsecurity spending below last year's levels, as proposed in my Budget. In addition, I urge the Congress to achieve the maximum amount of mandatory savings through reconciliation legislation over the next 5 years. These actions will advance our shared goal to maintain fiscal responsibility as we continue our assistance to hurricane-affected regions.

The details of this request are set forth in the enclosed letter from the Director of the Office of Management and Budget.

Sincerely,

GEORGE W. BUSH

The President's Radio Address
October 29, 2005

Good morning. This week marked another important milestone in carrying out our strategy in Iraq. On Tuesday, the Iraqi election commission formally certified the passage of the new Iraqi Constitution, after nearly 10 million Iraqis turned out to vote on it 2 weeks ago. This is a moment of tremendous significance for Iraq, the region, and the world. Three years ago, when Saddam Hussein ruled with an iron grip, the prospect of Iraqis voting on a democratic constitution would have been unthinkable. Now, the Iraqi people have shown that individual rights and rule by the people are universal principles and that these principles can become the basis for free and decent governments throughout the Middle East.

The new Iraqi Constitution received support from Iraqis of all ethnic and religious

backgrounds. Iraq's largest Sunni political party endorsed the Constitution and urged its followers to approve the draft. Many more Sunnis participated in this vote than in January's historic elections, and the level of violence was also dramatically lower. Even those who voted against the Constitution are now organizing and preparing for elections in December.

Just 30 months removed from the rule of a dictator and 9 months after they first elected their own leaders, the Iraqi people are resolving tough issues through an inclusive political process. And this process is isolating the extremists who wish to derail democracy through violence and murder.

The terrorists were also watching the Iraqi vote. These brutal killers follow a radical ideology that exploits Islam to serve a violent political vision. They hope to establish a totalitarian state in Iraq that denies all political and religious freedom, and they hope to use that country as a base for attacks on all people, Muslim and non-Muslim alike, who disagree with their twisted perversion of the Muslim faith.

The terrorists' goals leave no room for individual conscience or democratic participation, so they threatened to kill any Iraqi who went to the polls, including women and the elderly and even those who opposed the Constitution. And they continue to use random bombings to try to break the will of the Iraqi people and of coalition forces, as we saw again this week when the terrorists bombed two Baghdad hotels.

Instead of surrendering to intimidation, the Iraqi people once again risked their lives for their liberty. Instead of turning against one another, the Iraqi people turned out to express their will at the polls. And instead of allowing their nation to become a haven for terrorists, the Iraqis are choosing democracy and freedom for their country.

The political process in Iraq now moves forward. Iraqis will return to the polls in December to elect a new Government under their new Constitution. This Government will be our ally in the war on terror, a partner in the struggle for peace and moderation in the Muslim world, and an inspiration for people across the Middle East to claim their liberty as well.

Our security at home is directly linked to a Middle East that grows in freedom and peace. The success of the new Iraqi Government is critical to winning the war on terror and protecting the American people. Ensuring that success will require more sacrifice, more time, and more resolve, and it will involve more risk for Iraqis and for American and coalition forces.

The progress we have made so far has involved great sacrifice. The greatest burden has fallen on our military families. We've lost some of our Nation's finest men and women in the war on terror. Each of them has left grieving families and loved ones back home. Each loss of life is heartbreaking. Yet these patriots have also left a legacy that will allow generations of their fellow Americans and millions of others who have only known oppression to enjoy the blessings of liberty.

The best way to honor the sacrifice of our fallen troops is to complete the mission and win the war on terror. We will train Iraqi security forces and help a newly elected Government meet the needs of the Iraqi people. In doing so, we will lay the foundation of peace for our children and grandchildren.

Thank you for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 7:52 a.m. on October 28 in the Cabinet Room at the White House for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on October 29. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on October 28 but was embargoed for release until the broadcast. In his address, the President referred to former President Saddam Hussein of Iraq. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of this address.

Remarks Announcing the Nomination of Samuel A. Alito, Jr., To Be an Associate Justice of the Supreme Court of the United States

October 31, 2005

Good morning. I'm pleased to announce my nomination of Judge Samuel A. Alito, Jr., as Associate Justice of the Supreme Court of the United States. Judge Alito is one of the most accomplished and respected judges in America, and his long career in public service has given him an extraordinary breadth of experience.

As a Justice Department official, Federal prosecutor, and judge on the United States Court of Appeals, Sam Alito has shown a mastery of the law, a deep commitment of justice, and a—and he is a man of enormous character. He's scholarly, fair-minded, and principled, and these qualities will serve our Nation well on the highest Court of the land.

Judge Alito showed great promise from the beginning in studies at Princeton and Yale Law School, as editor of the Yale Law Journal, as a clerk for a Federal court of appeals judge. He served in the Army Reserves and was honorably discharged as a captain. Early in his career, Sam Alito worked as a Federal prosecutor and handled criminal and civil matters for the United States. As assistant to the Solicitor General, he argued 12 cases before the Supreme Court and has argued dozens of others before the Federal courts of appeals.

He served in the Justice Department's Office of Legal Counsel, providing constitutional advice for the President and the executive branch. In 1987, President Ronald Reagan named him the United States Attorney for the District of New Jersey, the top prosecutor in one of the Nation's largest Federal districts, and he was confirmed by unanimous consent by the Senate. He moved aggressively against white-collar and environmental crimes and drug trafficking and organized crime and violation of civil rights.

In his role, Sam Alito showed a passionate commitment to the rule of law, and he gained a reputation for being both tough and fair. In 1990, President Bush nominated Sam Alito, at the age of 39, for the United States Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit. Judge Alito's nomination received bipartisan support, and he was again confirmed by unanimous consent by the United States Senate. Judge Alito has served with distinction on that court for 15 years and now has more prior judicial experience than any Supreme Court nominee in more than 70 years.

Judge Alito's reputation has only grown over the span of his service. He has participated in thousands of appeals and authored hundreds of opinions. This record reveals a thoughtful judge who considers the legal matter—merits carefully and applies the law in a principled fashion. He has a deep understanding of the proper role of judges in our society. He understands that judges are to interpret the laws, not to impose their preferences or priorities on the people.

In the performance of his duties, Judge Alito has gained the respect of his colleagues and attorneys for his brilliance and decency. He's won admirers across the political spectrum. I'm confident that the United States Senate will be impressed by Judge Alito's distinguished record, his measured judicial temperament, and his tremendous personal integrity. And I urge the Senate to act promptly on this important nomination so that an up-or-down vote is held before the end of this year.

Today Judge Alito is joined by his wife, Martha, who was a law librarian when he first met her. Sam and I both know you can't go wrong marrying a librarian. Sam and Martha's two children, Phil and Laura, are also with us, and I know how proud

you are of your dad today. I'm sure as well that Judge Alito is thinking of his mom, Rose, who will be 91 in December. And I know he's thinking about his late father; Samuel Alito, Sr., came to this country as an immigrant child from Italy in 1914, and his fine family has realized the great promise of our country.

Judge, thanks for agreeing to serve, and congratulations on your nomination.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8:01 a.m. in the Cross Hall at the White House. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of Associate Justice-designate Alito. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of these remarks.

Remarks Following Discussions With Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi of Italy

October 31, 2005

President Bush. The Prime Minister and I will make statements. Thank you very much. Welcome.

It is good to have my friend back in the Oval Office. I say "my friend" because it seems like we see each other a lot, and every time we do, I appreciate your advice and your counsel. Relations between Italy and the United States are strong, and the relationship between our countries is important. It's important for our economies, and I'm pleased to know that trade is—between our countries is vibrant.

And this relationship is important because the United States has a strong partner in peace. I want to thank Silvio's strong commitment to the freedom of people in Afghanistan and in Iraq. I appreciate his strong vision of peace in the Balkans. In the past, we worked closely together to help the Libyan leader understand that we're living in a different world, a world in which we've got to work together for peace.

So it's my honor to welcome you back, Mr. Prime Minister.

Prime Minister Berlusconi. Thank you.

President Bush. And thank you for coming.

Prime Minister Berlusconi. Thank you, Mr. President. It's now a habit for me to come and pay homage to the President of the United States here at the Oval Office. It's always a pleasure for me. And it's a pleasure for me to come and see a friend, the leader of a friendly country.

Italy will be always—be grateful to the United States for what this country has been doing to free us from totalitarianism in the past century. And it is for us a reason of pride to be next—side by side with our American ally in broadening the borders of democracy and freedom in the world and in order to pursue peace, which is something we all aspire to.

I, personally, admire, very strong, the leadership shown by President Bush. He has—[*inaudible*]—the same values and the same principles I have. And he is very consistent in the decisions that he carries on. And I do believe that President Bush and what he has been doing will remain ingrained in history. In a sensitive moment of our global history, he will mark history as the one who had—he was so farsighted, because also within United Nations, he carried out a mission of democracy.

And this is the reason why Italy is a member of the community of democracies,

and we provide our support and contribution to the Fund for Democracy that President Bush established and which we joined recently in New York.

President Bush. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:44 a.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Col. Muammar Abu Minyar al-Qadhafi, leader of Libya. Prime Minister Berlusconi spoke in Italian, and his remarks were translated by an interpreter.

Remarks on the National Strategy for Pandemic Influenza Preparedness and Response in Bethesda, Maryland
November 1, 2005

Thank you all. Michael, thank you very much for your introduction. And thanks for the warm reception here at the National Institute of Health. It's good to be back here again.

For more than a century, the NIH has been at the forefront of this country's efforts to prevent, detect, and treat disease, and I appreciate the good work you're doing here. This is an important facility, an important complex, and the people who work here are really important to the security of this Nation. The scientists who have been supported by the folks who work here have developed and improved vaccines for meningitis and whooping cough and measles and mumps and rubella and chicken pox and other infectious diseases. Because of the revolutionary advances in medicine, pioneered with the help of the NIH, Americans no longer fear these dreaded diseases; many lives have been saved.

At this moment, the men and women of the NIH are working to protect the American people from another danger, the risk of avian and pandemic influenza. Today I have come to talk about our Nation's efforts to address this vital issue to the health and the safety of all Americans. I'm here to discuss our strategy to prevent and protect the American people from a possible outbreak.

I appreciate members of my Cabinet who are here. More importantly, I appreciate the hard work you've done on this issue—Secretary Rice, Secretary Johanns, Secretary Mineta, Secretary Nicholson, Secretary Chertoff.

I appreciate the fact that Dr. J.W. Lee, Director-General of the World Health Organization, has joined us. Dr. Lee, thank you for being here. I want to recognize Dr. David Nabarro, the Senior United Nations System Coordinator for Avian and Human Influenza. Thanks for being here. This is—you're about to hear me talk about the international scope of response and detection necessary to protect not only our own people but people around the world. And the fact that these two gentlemen are here is an important signal.

I want to thank Dr. Elias Zerhouni, he's the Director of the NIH—doing a fine job. I want to thank Julie Gerberding, who's the Director of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. I appreciate Dr. Rich Carmona, the U.S. Surgeon General; Dr. Tony Fauci, Director of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases. I want to thank Dr. Bruce Gellin, Director of the National Vaccine Program Office. I want to thank Dr. Andy von Eschenbach, who is the Acting Director of the FDA and the Director of the National Cancer Institute.

I appreciate all the members of the health care community who have joined us today. I want to thank State and local officials who are here. I particularly want to thank Senators Specter and Kennedy for

coming, as well as Congressmen Linder, Burgess, and Price.NM Appreciate you all taking time to be here.

Most Americans are familiar with the influenza or the "flu" as a respiratory illness that makes hundreds of thousands of people sick every year. This fall as the flu season approaches, millions of our fellow citizens are once again visiting their doctors for the annual flu shot. I had mine. For most, it's just simply a precautionary measure to avoid the fever or a sore throat or muscle aches that come with the flu. Seasonal flu is extremely dangerous for some, people whose immune systems have been weakened by age or illness, but it is not usually life-threatening for most healthy people.

Pandemic flu is another matter. Pandemic flu occurs when a new strain of influenza emerges that can be transmitted easily from person to person and for which there is little or no natural immunity. Unlike seasonal flu, most people have not built up resistance to it. And unlike seasonal flu, it can kill those who are young and healthy as well as those who are frail and sick.

At this moment, there is no pandemic influenza in the United States or the world. But if history is our guide, there is reason to be concerned. In the last century, our country and the world have been hit by three influenza pandemics, and viruses from birds contributed to all of them. The first, which struck in 1918, killed over a half-a-million Americans and more than 20 million people across the globe. One-third of the U.S. population was infected, and life expectancy in our country was reduced by 13 years. The 1918 pandemic was followed by pandemics in 1957 and 1968, which killed tens of thousands of Americans and millions across the world.

Three years ago, the world had a preview of the disruption an influenza pandemic can cause when a previously unknown virus called SARS appeared in rural China. When an infected doctor carried the virus out of China, it spread to Vietnam and Singapore and Canada within a month. Before long, the SARS virus had spread to nearly 30 countries on six continents. It infected more than 8,000 people and killed nearly 800. One elderly woman brought the virus from Hong Kong to Toronto, where it quickly spread to her son and then to others. Eventually, four others arrived with the virus, and hundreds of Canadians fell ill with SARS, and dozens died.

By one estimate, the SARS outbreak cost the Asian-Pacific region about $40 billion. The airline industry was hit particularly hard, with air travel to Asia dropping 45 percent in the year after the outbreak. All this was caused by a limited outbreak of a virus that infected thousands and lasted about 6 months. A global influenza pandemic that infects millions and lasts from 1 to 3 years could be far worse.

Scientists and doctors cannot tell us where or when the next pandemic will strike or how severe it will be, but most agree, at some point, we are likely to face another pandemic. And the scientific community is increasingly concerned by a new influenza virus known as H5N1 or avian flu that is now spreading through bird populations across Asia and has recently reached Europe.

This new strain of influenza has infected domesticated birds like ducks and chickens as well as long-range migratory birds. In 1997, the first recorded outbreak among people took place in Hong Kong, when 18 people became infected and 6 died from the disease. Public health officials in the region took aggressive action and successfully contained the spread of the virus. Avian flu struck again in late 2003 and has infected over 120 people in Thailand, Cambodia, Vietnam, and Indonesia, and killed more than 60. That's a fatality rate of about 50 percent.

At this point, we do not have evidence that a pandemic is imminent. Most of the people in Southeast Asia who got sick were handling infected birds. And while the

avian flu virus has spread from Asia to Europe, there are no reports of infected birds, animals, or people in the United States. Even if the virus does eventually appear on our shores in birds, that does not mean people in our country will be infected. Avian flu is still primarily an animal disease. And as of now, unless people come into direct, sustained contact with infected birds, it is unlikely they will come down with avian flu.

While avian flu has not yet acquired the ability to spread easily from human to human, there is still cause for vigilance. The virus has developed some characteristics needed to cause a pandemic. It has demonstrated the ability to infect human beings, and it has produced a fatal illness in humans. If the virus were to develop the capacity for sustained human-to-human transmission, it could spread quickly across the globe.

Our country has been given fair warning of this danger to our homeland and time to prepare. My responsibility as the President is to take measures now to protect the American people from the possibility that human-to-human transmission may occur. So several months ago, I directed all relevant departments and agencies in the Federal Government to take steps to address the threat of avian and pandemic flu. Since that time, my administration has developed a comprehensive national strategy, with concrete measures we can take to prepare for an influenza pandemic.

Today I am announcing key elements of that strategy. Our strategy is designed to meet three critical goals: First, we must detect outbreaks that occur anywhere in the world; second, we must protect the American people by stockpiling vaccines and antiviral drugs and improve our ability to rapidly produce new vaccines against a pandemic strain; and third, we must be ready to respond at the Federal, State, and local levels in the event that a pandemic reaches our shores.

To meet these three goals, our strategy will require the combined efforts of government officials in public health, medical, veterinary, and law enforcement communities and the private sector. It will require the active participation of the American people. And it will require the immediate attention of the United States Congress so we can have the resources in place to begin implementing this strategy right away.

The first part of our strategy is to detect outbreaks before they spread across the world. In the fight against avian and pandemic flu, early detection is our first line of defense. A pandemic is a lot like a forest fire: If caught early, it might be extinguished with limited damage; if allowed to smolder undetected, it can grow to an inferno that spreads quickly beyond our ability to control it. So we're taking immediate steps to ensure early warning of an avian or pandemic flu outbreak among animals or humans anywhere in the world.

In September at the United Nations, I announced a new International Partnership on Avian and Pandemic Influenza, a global network of surveillance and preparedness that will help us to detect and respond quickly to any outbreaks of the disease. The partnership requires participating countries that face an outbreak to immediately share information and provide samples to the World Health Organization. By requiring transparency, we can respond more rapidly to dangerous outbreaks.

Since we announced this global initiative, the response from across the world has been very positive. Already, 88 countries and 9 international organizations have joined the effort. Senior officials from participating governments recently convened the partnership's first meeting here in Washington.

Together, we're working to control and monitor avian flu in Asia and to ensure that all nations have structures in place to recognize and report outbreaks before they spread beyond human control. I've requested $251 million from Congress to help

our foreign partners train local medical personnel, expand their surveillance and testing capacity, draw up preparedness plans, and take other vital actions to detect and contain outbreaks.

A flu pandemic would have global consequences, so no nation can afford to ignore this threat, and every nation has responsibilities to detect and stop its spread.

Here in the United States, we're doing our part. To strengthen domestic surveillance, my administration is launching the National Bio-Surveillance Initiative. This initiative will help us rapidly detect, quantify, and respond to outbreaks of disease in humans and animals and deliver information quickly to State and local and national and international public health officials. By creating systems that provide continuous situational awareness, we're more likely to be able to stop, slow, or limit the spread of the pandemic and save American lives.

The second part of our strategy is to protect the American people by stockpiling vaccines and antiviral drugs and accelerating development of new vaccine technologies. One of the challenges presented by a pandemic is that scientists need a sample of the new strain before they can produce a vaccine against it. This means it is difficult to produce a pandemic vaccine before the pandemic actually appears, and so there may not be a vaccine capable of fully immunizing our citizens from the new influenza virus during the first several months of a pandemic.

To help protect our citizens during these early months when a fully effective vaccine would not be available, we're taking a number of immediate steps. Researchers here at the NIH have developed a vaccine based on the current strain of the avian flu virus. The vaccine is already in clinical trials. And I'm asking that the Congress fund $1.2 billion for the Department of Health and Human Services to purchase enough doses of this vaccine from manufacturers to vaccinate 20 million people.

This vaccine would not be a perfect match to the pandemic flu because the pandemic strain would probably differ somewhat from the avian flu virus it grew from. But a vaccine against the current avian flu virus would likely offer some protection against a pandemic strain and possibly save many lives in the first critical months of an outbreak.

We're also increasing stockpiles of antiviral drugs such as Tamiflu and Relenza. Antiviral drugs cannot prevent people from contracting the flu. It can—but they can reduce the severity of the illness when taken within 48 hours of getting sick. So in addition to vaccines, which are the foundation of our pandemic response, I am asking Congress for a billion dollars to stockpile additional antiviral medications, so that we have enough on hand to help treat first-responders and those on the frontlines, as well as populations most at risk in the first stages of a pandemic.

To protect the greatest possible number of Americans during a pandemic, the cornerstone of our strategy is to develop new technologies that will allow us to produce new vaccines rapidly. If a pandemic strikes, our country must have a surge capacity in place that will allow us to bring a new vaccine on line quickly and manufacture enough to immunize every American against the pandemic strain.

I recently met with leaders of the vaccine industry. They assured me that they will work with the Federal Government to expand the vaccine industry, so that our country is better prepared for any pandemic. Today, the NIH is working with vaccine makers to develop new cell-culture techniques that will help us bring a pandemic flu vaccine to the American people faster in the event of an outbreak. Right now most vaccines are still produced with 1950's technology using chicken eggs that are infected with the influenza virus and then used to develop and produce vaccines. In the event of a pandemic, this antiquated

process would take many, many months to produce a vaccine, and it would not allow us to produce enough vaccine for every American in time.

Since American lives depend on rapid advances in vaccine-production technology, we must fund a crash program to help our best scientists bring the next generation of technology on line rapidly. I'm asking Congress for $2.8 billion to accelerate development of cell-culture technology. By bringing cell-culture technology from the research laboratory into the production line, we should be able to produce enough vaccine for every American within 6 months of the start of a pandemic.

I'm also asking Congress to remove one of the greatest obstacles to domestic vaccine production, the growing burden of litigation. In the past three decades, the number of vaccine manufacturers in America has plummeted as the industry has been flooded with lawsuits. Today, there is only one manufacturer in the United States that can produce influenza vaccine. That leaves our Nation vulnerable in the event of a pandemic. We must increase the number of vaccine manufacturers in our country and improve our domestic production capacity. So, Congress must pass liability protection for the makers of lifesaving vaccines.

By making wise investments in technology and breaking down barriers to vaccine production, we're working toward a clear goal: In the event of a pandemic, we must have enough vaccine for every American.

The third part of our strategy is to ensure that we are ready to respond to a pandemic outbreak. A pandemic is unlike other natural disasters; outbreaks can happen simultaneously in hundreds or even thousands of locations at the same time. And unlike storms or floods, which strike in an instant and then recede, a pandemic can continue spreading destruction in repeated waves that can last for a year or more.

To respond to a pandemic, we must have emergency plans in place in all 50 States and every local community. We must ensure that all levels of government are ready to act to contain an outbreak. We must be able to deliver vaccines and other treatments to frontline responders and at-risk populations.

So my administration is working with public health officials in the medical community to develop effective pandemic emergency plans. We're working at the Federal level. We're looking at ways and options to coordinate our response with State and local leaders. I've asked Mike Leavitt—Secretary Leavitt—to bring together State and local public health officials from across the Nation to discuss their plans for a pandemic and to help them improve pandemic planning at the community level. I'm asking Congress to provide $583 million for pandemic preparedness, including $100 million to help States complete and exercise their pandemic plans now, before a pandemic strikes.

If an influenza pandemic strikes, every nation, every State in this Union, and every community in these States must be ready.

To respond to a pandemic, we need medical personnel and adequate supplies of equipment. In a pandemic, everything from syringes to hospital beds, respirators, masks, and protective equipment would be in short supply. So the Federal Government is stockpiling critical supplies in locations across America as part of the Strategic National Stockpile. The Department of Health and Human Services is helping States create rosters of medical personnel who are willing to help alleviate local shortfalls during a pandemic. And every Federal department involved in health care is expanding plans to ensure that all Federal medical facilities, personnel, and response capabilities are available to support local communities in the event of a pandemic crisis.

To respond to a pandemic, the American people need to have information to protect themselves and others. In a pandemic, an

infection carried by one person can be transmitted to many other people, and so every American must take personal responsibility for stopping the spread of the virus. To provide Americans with more information about pandemics, we're launching a new web site, pandemicflu.gov. That ought to be easy for people to remember: pandemicflu.gov. The web site will keep our citizens informed about the preparations underway, steps they can take now to prepare for a pandemic, and what every American can do to decrease their risk of contracting and spreading the disease in the event of an outbreak.

To respond to a pandemic, members of the international community will continue to work together. An influenza pandemic would be an event with global consequences, and therefore we'll continue to meet to develop a global response. We've called nations together in the past and will continue to call nations together to work with public health experts to better coordinate our efforts to deal with a disaster.

Now, all the steps I've outlined today require immediate resources. Because a pandemic could strike at any time, we can't waste time in preparing. So to meet all our goals, I'm requesting a total of $7.1 billion in emergency funding from the United States Congress. By making critical investments today, we'll strengthen our ability to safeguard the American people in the awful event of a devastating global pandemic and, at the same time, will bring our Nation's public health and medical infrastructure more squarely in the 21st century.

The steps I've outlined will also help our Nation in other critical ways. By perfecting cell-based technologies now, we will be able to produce vaccines for a range of illnesses and save countless lives. By strengthening our domestic vaccine industry, we can help ensure that our Nation will never again have a shortage of vaccine for seasonal flu. And by putting in place and exercising pandemic emergency plans across the Nation, we can help our Nation prepare for other dangers, such as a terrorist attack using chemical or biological weapons.

Leaders at every level of government have a responsibility to confront dangers before they appear and engage the American people on the best course of action. It is vital that our Nation discuss and address the threat of pandemic flu now. There is no pandemic flu in our country or in the world at this time, but if we wait for a pandemic to appear, it will be too late to prepare, and one day many lives could be needlessly lost because we failed to act today.

By preparing now, we can give our citizens some peace of mind knowing that our Nation is ready to act at the first sign of danger and that we have the plans in place to prevent and, if necessary, withstand an influenza pandemic.

Thank you for coming today to let me outline my strategy. Thank the United States Congress for considering this measure. May God bless you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:04 a.m. in the William H. Natcher Conference Center at the National Institutes of Health. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of these remarks.

Letter to the Speaker of the House of Representatives Requesting Funds for the National Strategy for Pandemic Influenza Preparedness and Response

November 1, 2005

Dear Mr. Speaker:

Today, I outlined a strategy to address the threat of avian and pandemic influenza. This strategy is designed to meet three critical goals: to detect and contain outbreaks before they spread across the world, to protect the American people by stockpiling vaccines and antiviral drugs and accelerating the development of new vaccine technologies, and to ensure that Federal, State, and local communities are prepared for potential domestic outbreaks.

To provide the necessary resources to immediately begin the implementation of this strategy, I ask the Congress to consider the enclosed requests, totaling $7.1 billion, for the Departments of Health and Human Services, Agriculture, Defense, Homeland Security, the Interior, State, and Veterans Affairs, as well as for International Assistance Programs.

I hereby designate the proposals in the amount requested herein as emergency requirements, and I urge the Congress to act expeditiously on this request to ensure the country is prepared for this growing danger.

The details of this request are set forth in the enclosed letter from the Director of the Office of Management and Budget.

Sincerely,

GEORGE W. BUSH

Message to the Congress on Continuation of the National Emergency With Respect to Sudan

November 1, 2005

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. Consistent with this provision, I have sent the enclosed notice to the *Federal Register* for publication, stating that the Sudan emergency is to continue in effect beyond November 3, 2005. The most recent notice continuing this emergency was published in the *Federal Register* on November 2, 2004 (69 *FR* 63915).

The crisis between the United States and Sudan constituted by the actions and policies of the Government of Sudan that led to the declaration of a national emergency on November 3, 1997, has not been resolved. These actions and policies are hostile to U.S. interests and pose a continuing unusual and extraordinary threat to the national security and foreign policy of the United States. Therefore, I have determined that it is necessary to continue the national emergency declared with respect to Sudan and maintain in force comprehensive sanctions against Sudan to respond to this threat.

GEORGE W. BUSH

The White House,
November 1, 2005.

NOTE: The notice is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

Message to the House of Representatives Returning an Enrolled Bill for Technical Corrections
November 1, 2005

To the House of Representatives:

Consistent with House Concurrent Resolution 276, I am hereby returning the enrolled bill H.R. 3765, "An Act to extend through December 31, 2007, the authority of the Secretary of the Army to accept and expend funds contributed by non-Federal public entities to expedite the processing of permits," to the House of Representatives for the purposes of making necessary corrections.

GEORGE W. BUSH

The White House,
November 1, 2005.

Interview With Foreign Print Journalists
November 1, 2005

The President. A couple of comments, and then I'll answer some questions, two apiece. Then I've got to go back to work.

I've always felt that good foreign policy starts in your neighborhood. So this trip is a continuation of the United States working with different countries and me working with leaders to have a good relationship in the neighborhood. I remember the first Summit of the Americas I went to, which was in Canada. And in the opening comments, it struck me that it's an amazing neighborhood when there's only—every country is a democracy except for one.

And so part of the reason, to me, and part of the reasons to have multilateral diplomacy, which this is, coupled with a lot of bilateral action, is to continue to foster democracy. Democracy is the best hope of all. Democracy is the form of government that can best respond to the demands of the people.

I also strongly believe that we have a great opportunity to deal with job creation or poverty by putting a system in place that encourages economic growth and entrepreneurship. At the first Summit of the Americas we talked about the Free Trade Agreement of the Americas, which basically says that a trading hemisphere is one that is more likely to be able to address the needs of people, more likely to be able to address poverty, more likely to be able to help countries' balance sheets be firmed up.

Since then, we've entered into bilateral trading agreements with Chile, multilateral trading agreements with—through CAFTA-DR, and we'll continue to pursue trading agreements bilaterally, multilaterally, as well as worldwide. And I'm looking forward to speaking to all my fellow friends and leaders down there about the Doha round, particularly President Lula. And we can talk about that, if you like, later on. But he's played a very constructive role and can continue to play a constructive role in getting the Doha round up and running. The United States has an obligation to make

sure that we put forth policies that encourage the process to move on, and we've done so, particularly on agriculture, which is—people who follow this very closely understand this is a very difficult issue for some. And we took a leadership position on that.

But I'm looking forward to talking about that. And the reason why trade is so vital is because, particularly when addressing poverty, that, you know, grants and loans and—pale in comparison to the amount of good that can be done as commerce develops at all levels of government—at all levels of society, as a result of trade. The World Bank estimates that 300 million people will be eliminated from the poverty rolls as the result of a successful Doha round. And so that's going to be an important subject.

And finally, good governance is an important subject. One of the most interesting policy initiatives that this administration has put forward is called the Millennium Challenge Account, which basically says that if you're a poor country, that we want to participate in helping you, so long as you're honest and invest in the people through health and education. It's a good governance initiative that goes hand in hand with job creation, eliminating poverty, and democracy.

And so those are important subjects. So I'm looking forward to going. It's going to be a—I've never been to Argentina. I'm looking forward to going to Argentina. I hear it's a spectacular country. I've never been to Brazil. I'm looking forward to going to Brazil. And I've never been to Panama. So this will be a great experience for me to continue visiting these magnificent countries in our neighborhood.

With that, we'll start. Jorge [Jorge Elias, La Nacion], *como yo*?

Argentina-U.S. Relations/International Monetary Fund

Q. Mr. President, in Argentina, you will have a bilateral meeting with President Kirchner.

The President. Si.

Q. What I want to know—sources of the government told me that they would ask you about more cooperation on support for Argentina, you know, in the IMF fund——

The President. IMF.

Q. Exactly.

The President. Please don't tell me that the government leaks secrets about conversations to the——

Q. Well, I have my sources in the government.

The President. You do? Okay, well, I'm not going to ask you who they are, of course. [*Laughter*]

Q. No, please.

The President. Inside joke here, for my team. [*Laughter*] First of all, I was more than happy and my government was more than happy to help Argentina with the IMF crisis. We became involved with the government in trying to get the issue resolved. I think any objective observer would say that the U.S. participation was helpful. And we were more than pleased to do so. And by the way, our help was justified by the economic recovery of the country. It's been noteworthy for those who were skeptical about U.S. involvement in the IMF to see that the economy is growing robustly and that the government is stewards of the people's money and that Kirchner and his government did a good job of negotiating on behalf of the people of Argentina. So we've got a record of involvement.

Secondly, since he has proven himself to be capable of performing, it seems like to me that the best policy ought to be for the Argentina—Argentine Government to deal directly with the IMF, without the U.S. having to be a middleman. And so that's what I'll tell—I guess I just told him what's going to happen in the private meeting—[*laughter*]—is that—no, we will, of course, listen to any request from a friend. But it seems like to me that President Kirchner and his economic team, his financial team, has laid the groundwork for

being plenty capable of dealing with the IMF directly.

Paulo [Paulo Sotero, O Estado de San Paulo].

Brazil-U.S. Relations/Trade

Q. Mr. President, you have been very positive, sometimes even effusive about your relationship or your dialog with President Lula, and Brazil-U.S. relationship in general. But not much has come out of this, in terms of concrete initiatives. For instance, our main joint project, FTAA-ALCA has gone sort of backwards; it's stalled. So why is that so? Why is this dialog that superficially seems so good, doesn't produce more in terms of complete results?

The President. Well, first of all, we do have a good relationship, and I think that started with a lot of the observers. I'm not suggesting it started with you, Paulo, but nevertheless, I think people had this vision about George W. one way, and Lula the other, and that there's no way that these two men could possibly find common ground. I think that's—at least I sense that, particularly coming out of some of the South American press.

And yet our first meeting in the Oval Office was very warm and cordial. We shared the same deep concern to help alleviate hunger and poverty. We may have a different kind of political sense of things initially, but nevertheless, we share the same goals, and therefore have established a good, cordial, frank relationship.

Secondly, trade between Brazil and the United States is growing. That's important. That's not a given. Secondly, Doha—you're right, the FTAA has stalled; I agree. On the other hand, at this point in time, the Doha round really trumps the FTAA as a priority, because the Doha round not only involves our neighborhood, it involves the whole world. And I spoke to President Lula yesterday, and I thanked him for the spirit of cooperation on the Doha round. Brazil is a very important player in Doha. It commands the respect of not only the United States and the EU but also other countries which may or may not follow its lead. But nevertheless, when Brazil speaks, people listen carefully.

And one of the parts of the strategy has been to make sure that—and, obviously, the Brazilian agriculture is an important issue for President Lula, as it is for the Brazilian people. And he has expressed concern in the past that the United States would be unwilling to make a subsidy—a statement on subsidies that is profound, which I just did. He appreciated it. Both of us were somewhat disappointed in the EU response, because the whole theory has been the EU and the United States show good faith on agriculture, the rest of the world will show good faith on services and intellectual property rights and the other issues that are important to get Doha moving.

But my only point is, there's been good cooperation. I mean, this—Doha hasn't finished yet, but it's important for the world, not only Brazil and America but for everybody else that Doha move forward, and there is a spirit of cooperation between Brazil and the United States to see if that can't get done. As a matter of fact, the previous ministerial on WTO—I remember speaking to President Lula about getting our trade ministers together. He agreed; I agreed, and so the process moved forward.

Thirdly, in our own hemisphere, we have issues such as Haiti. Brazil has been the leader of the peacekeeping force, has done very good work through the U.N.—through the United Nations. The United States is supportive of that process. As you know, we've got a lot of equity in Haiti, as does Brazil. It's important for us to work closely together, and we will. And we're involved with the democracy movement there, as is Brazil. So in other words, there's a collaborative effort to promote democracy in the neighborhood. So whether it be trade, or potential of even further trade, or whether it be working together on the science and

technology, sharing of science and technology, or whether it be in promoting democracy in the neighborhood, the relationship is vital and important.

Brazil is a big, big, important country in this world, and the United States recognizes that.

Betty [Betty Brannan], La Prensa.

Panama

Q. Yes, Mr. President. Do you see parallels between the U.S. invasion of Panama and the invasion now of Iraq? And does that—has that motivated your choice to go to Panama at this time?

The President. They're totally different circumstances, in that, obviously, one happened in our own neighborhood, one happened far away; one happened after fair warning, one happened after a long stay in the United Nations. Both actions, hopefully, will lead to democracies and a better world for the citizens in those countries in which they live.

And, no, I'm not going to Panama for that reason. I'm going to Panama because Panama is a friend. I'm going to Panama because I want to see the canal and thank the government and the Panamanian people for being such good stewards of the canal, of being smart on security matters, recognizing the importance of the canal for trade, and for doing a fine job. And I want to see the canal firsthand, which I've never seen.

I told the President when he was here, that I would consider coming. He's a good Texas A&M graduate, as you might know. We had a very cordial discussion, and I thought it would be a good thing to go there. I'm looking forward to it.

Secondly, I want to talk about trade. Panama is not a part of CAFTA. It makes sense for Panama to be a part of the trading process that's going on. CAFTA is very important. It's important for countries south of the CAFTA region. It's important for countries north of the CAFTA region. It's important that these young democracies have a—you know, have the opportunity to sell products into our market, and we have an opportunity to sell products into their market on a level playing field, so as to create opportunities for people. Opening markets creates more markets. It could be markets for Argentina, markets for Brazil. The more available customers there are to businesses large and small, the more commerce will flow. And so CAFTA is important, and it makes sense for Panama to be considered to be a part of these trading agreements that are growing. And so I'm going for a lot of reasons. Thank you.

Macarena [Macarena Vidal Liy, EFE News Services].

U.S. Relations With Latin America

Q. Like the song.

The President. Si. Where do you live, Macarena?

Q. I live here.

The President. Oh, good. Where are you from?

Q. From Spain, but I ran away from that song 15 years ago. [*Laughter*] It's following me all over the world.

You have talked about the importance of having good relationships within the neighborhood, and yet there seem to be worrying signs for the U.S. and Latin America. The polls trend to growing anti-Americanism feeling in the region; the Secretary General in the OAS is not the man you backed at the beginning; either American summit that took place recently finished with a declaration that was not fully to the taste of the United States. Is the United States at risk of losing its influence in Latin America?

The President. Well, one reason why we have summits such as this is to remind people that we want to be good neighbors and good friends. And we share a lot of values, common values together. I mean, I'm going to a country, Argentina, that's a proud democracy. I'm going to a country, Brazil, which is—which has had a peaceful election, which was a very important step.

I'm going to Panama, which wasn't always a democracy and now is a flourishing democracy.

And it's a chance to say to people in the neighborhood, "We share values, rule of law, justice, human rights, human dignity, the right for women to participate equally in society." These are very powerful messages. I will come and say to the people, the leadership, and whoever is listening down there, that our markets are open, so long as you open your markets. In other words, let's have open markets. The United States has got a strong economy, and it makes sense for countries to want to trade with us, and we want to trade with them.

And so the message is one of jobs and democracy and honesty and open government. Look, I understand not everybody agrees with the decisions I've made, but that's not unique to Central or South America. Truth of the matter is, there's people who disagree with the decisions I've made all over the world. And I understand that, but that's what happens when you make decisions.

And so I feel like relations are good. I think just so long as America never abandons her principles, that are universal in application, that this country will be fine. And listen, politicians come and go, but what doesn't change is the importance of standing on principle and working with our friends in Central and South America that agree with the same principles.

As I repeat, I'm going to three countries that stand squarely on the principles. We may not agree on every issue. I understand that. And I don't expect people down there to—first of all, I don't think good relations necessarily mean somebody has to agree with America 100 percent of the time. That's not the definition of good relations. Good relations is mutual respect and a desire to work together to solve common problems and, most importantly, though, adherence to common values. I keep saying that.

Democracy is not an American value; it's a universal value. Human rights and human dignity is not uniquely American; it's important. It's important in Argentina as the history of your country has shown. It's very important in Brazil. It's been equally important in Panama, the notion of human rights and human dignity. There was a period of time in your country, just like there was a period of time in my country, where there wasn't a great adherence to human rights universally.

And so, the concept of democracy, as working through these issues, sharing experiences, and working together to continue the march of decency and freedom, is a very important part of this agenda.

Jorge, *uno mas*.

Venezuela/Energy

Q. Okay. Mr. President, President Chavez asked the Argentine Government to build a nuclear reactor for energy in Venezuela. Is that a danger for the region? Is that a danger for the United States?

The President. Repeat that again. Asked the Argentine Government to build a nuclear reactor?

Q. The Argentine Government to build a nuclear reactor for energy in Venezuela?

The President. Well, it's—my view is, is that there are international safeguards that are very important that all nations adhere to, that there must be total transparency. I have proposed that we think of an international concept of sharing highly enriched uranium necessary for the running of a nuclear powerplant, for power, with countries, and that—collecting that material and disposing of it in a reasonable and a sound way. It's—I guess if I were a taxpayer in Venezuela, I would wonder about the energy supply that Venezuela has.

But maybe it makes sense; I haven't really studied the proposal. And I look forward to—hope President Kirchner shares with me the concept, the notion, the idea.

Q. You will talk with him about this?

The President. If he wants to talk about it, I'd be curious to know. It's the first I've heard of it, and it's an interesting question.

President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva of Brazil

Q. Mr. President, about relations, the building of democracy in our hemisphere, and for ideological—apart to the ideological reasons, apart for reasons relating to Brazil's own interest, President Lula has very close, friendly relationships with leaders that are considered enemies of the United States—Fidel Castro, Chavez, Evo Morales in Bolivia, that may become a President. But the U.S., and you reiterated that, continues to view Brazil as spark of the construction of democracy in our hemisphere. Could you explain to us how this dynamic works between you and President Lula, of having those different partners?

The President. Well, first of all, it's certainly not the role of the United States, nor me, to say to President Lula, "Here's your list of friends. You can't talk to somebody." He's the duly elected leader of a great country, and he can make decisions to discuss matters with whomever he chooses. And frankly, it may make sense, in his position as a giant country in South America to have relations with every leader on the—in South America or the Caribbean.

And so I've never really discussed with him who all his friends are. I never had that discussion. On the other hand, I do think it's useful at times if I've got concerns about matters in the hemisphere, to be able to pick up the phone to President Lula and say, "I've got a concern with so-and-so. I've got a concern about this. Would you mind looking into that," or, "Is there a chance we can work together to resolve a problem?"

Q. ——would have done it.

The President. I've talked in general about my concerns about people eroding democratic institutions—I will never reveal a private conversation with another leader—but I have. And frankly, it's—he's in a unique position, let's put it that way, and I respect that. And I think it's important that he be in a position of influence with a lot of countries in the hemisphere to promote the common values that we agree in.

No, I've got respect for President Lula. He's an interesting man. Obviously, we've come from different backgrounds and different perspectives, obviously different countries. And yet, he's—again I repeat to you my first—I'm kind of getting way off base here, but just to share some color. One of my most important initiatives is this Faith-Based and Community-Based Initiative here in the United States. I believe that oftentimes government is limited in its capacity to help save lives. And I know that there are grassroots programs that are more likely to be able to go into some of the most hopeless neighborhoods and to corners of despair and be able to help save lives by, first of all, being motivated by love, and it's sometimes helpful to have people motivated by love have access to money in order to be able to solve problems. And I felt like we ought to open up government funding to competitive bidding by faith-based organizations.

And I shared this with President Lula. And the reason—I shared this vision and this concept as a way to deal with some of society's intractable problems. And he was sharing with me his vision about dealing with his hunger initiative, for example. And so I was impressed by a person who is willing to take on some of these tough issues in order to make his respective country a better place, as I'm trying to do in mine.

Yes, Betty.

Panama-U.S. Relations

Q. My question is about security, Mr. President, in the region. Panama is a strategic location, which has been both a strength and a vulnerability. And whenever Panamanians hear talk about canal security

and frontier—border security with Colombia, there is the suspicion that perhaps the United States would like to reestablish a military presence on the isthmus, or at least recreate a military out of the police force we have, because we eliminated the army after the fall of the dictatorship. Could you address those concerns, please?

The President. We have no plans for a base, and sovereign governments are just that, they're sovereign. And if they say, "We'd like to work on some kind of security arrangement," that's not the case with Panama right now, but if that were the case, we'd be openminded. But we have no specific plans at all for a base. And let me ask my National Security Adviser to make sure I don't get out on a limb that you would then immediately saw off. [*Laughter*]

Q. Not I.

The President. Good. But, no, I mean, one reason why you have good, strong diplomatic relations is that you're able just to share thoughts and talk about issues that matter. But no, there's no plans for that.

Q. Or for some kind of military presence that is less than a base, or forward operating location or something?

The President. I'm not aware of that, if that's the case. I presume the President, if he is interested in discussing that with me, like a forward operating base, would be—will bring it up to me. Let me just say, it hasn't made it to the Oval Office yet, and so if there's any rumors to that effect, I would chalk them up as rumors.

Q. Thank you.

The President. But I'm confident that if this is on his mind, he'll bring it up. I don't recall he brought it up the last time he was in the Oval Office. Again, violating the principle of telling private conversations to journalists.

Macarena.

U.S. Relations With Latin America

Q. I promise I won't dance.

The President. You can dance here. You'd be the first person to dance on the Roosevelt table since I've been the President.

Q. I'm not supposed to be the star. [*Laughter*]

The President. Pretty good sense of humor there, Macarena. Very good.

Q. Thanks. What do you think about the prospective of—in the Bolivian election, the victory of an overtly leftist candidate, Evo Morales, of his peasant movement? And in that case, are you worried about a possible "axis of evil" in Latin America—Venezuela and Bolivia?

The President. Macarena, one thing is, is that I've learned not to make political forecasts and prognostications, whether it be here at home or elsewhere. The thing that we're interested in is fair elections, free and fair elections where people have the chance to express themselves at the ballot box. And that's what democracy is all about—free from foreign influence, free from corruption, open elections, so that people can feel free and comfortable to vote. And that's what we look at. We don't—I don't speak out trying to interfere in the local process.

And so, we will see how the people vote. With our Embassy, of course, we'll be there involved with—at least to the extent asked to be involved, with making sure the elections are free and fair. And that's all you can ask. And then the people will decide who they want, and that's what democracy does. Democracy—and that's what, by the way, differentiates democracy from other forms of government. Sometimes you've had different forms of government in our own hemisphere and around the world, where the people don't decide but an elite decides, a handful of people gets to decide the fate of the people. And that, throughout history, has led to resentment and hatreds and turmoil and conflict.

And that's why this trip is important, because it will give us a chance to, again,

speak to these universal values and universal truths. And one of the universal truths is, democracies lead to peace. Democracies don't fight each other. Democracies are capable of having different types of leaders be able to work in concert to solve common problems. Democracies respond to—and by responding to the will of the people, democracy tends to be able to more likely lift up people, give people a chance to succeed. I strongly believe that. And I believe that these concepts are applicable to all peoples.

I believe freedom is universal. It's not contained within one country or one religion or one type of person. There's a universality to freedom. I believe mothers around the world desire their children to grow up in freedom. It doesn't matter whether you're Muslim, Christian, Jew, Hindu. That's what I believe. And I believe if you speak Spanish or English—it doesn't matter—you want to be free—or Portuguese.

And so these are valuable lessons that we should have—that we must learn around the world. And to the extent that people adhere to those principles, the United States of America says, the people matter. On the other hand, if we think that people are disrupting the normal course of democracy, unwinding institutions such as the free press, not allowing people to worship freely, we'll speak up. We'll speak up, as I hope others do as well.

As I say, there's universality to freedom that's important, and those of us who are fortunate enough to live in free and democratic societies should work to encourage others to make sure they hold those institutions dear. There are just some institutions that are vital for a society to be free and open and transparent, for the good of the people, for the good of the people.

Listen, thanks for coming by. Looking forward to the trip.

NOTE: The interview was taped at 1:18 p.m. in the Roosevelt Room at the White House. In his remarks, the President referred to President Nestor Kirchner of Argentina; and President Martin Torrijos Espino of Panama. Journalists referred to Secretary General Jose Miguel Insulza of the Organization of the American States; President Hugo Chavez Frias of Venezuela; President Fidel Castro Ruz of Cuba; and Evo Morales, Presidential candidate in Bolivia. The transcript was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on November 2. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of this interview. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this interview.

Remarks at a State Dinner Honoring Prince Charles and Duchess Camilla of the United Kingdom

November 2, 2005

The President. Your Royal Highness, it is a great honor for Laura and me to host you and Her Royal Highness the Duchess of Cornwall at the White House. Your visit is a reminder of the unique and enduring bond between the United Kingdom and the United States. Americans know that we have no greater friend than the United Kingdom. And it's my sincere hope that the United Kingdom knows it has no greater admirer than the United States.

Our nations are intimately linked through deep historical and cultural ties, through active commercial and political bonds, and through shared values. Nowhere are those shared values more nobly expressed than in our common commitment to expanding freedom in this world.

In the first part of the 20th century, our nations stood together to ensure that fascism did not prevail in Europe. In the second half of the 20th century, we worked tirelessly to defeat the totalitarian ideology of communism. And today, we're fighting side by side against an ideology of hatred and intolerance to ensure that the 21st century will be one of liberty and hope.

The people of the United States draw great strength from having the United Kingdom as an ally. The nation that defied bombardment from the air in 1940 once again refused to cower when its people were bombed from underground this summer. Your courage and fortitude are an inspiration to people throughout the world.

Just as Britain is a leader in the effort to spread freedom and opportunity abroad, Your Royal Highness is a leader in creating greater opportunity at home. Your compassion and charitable efforts such as the Prince's Trust continue to help more of Britain's young people and entrepreneurs pursue their dreams in life.

Your Royal Highness, your generous spirit, your steadfast leadership, and your devotion to your people are an inspiration. Laura and I are honored to have you and Her Royal Highness as guests this evening, and I'd now like to offer a toast to the enduring friendship between the United Kingdom and the United States.

Prince Charles. Mr. President, Mrs. Bush, ladies and gentlemen, can I just say what a joy it is for both my wife and myself to be with you here in the White House. It brings back many fond and happy memories of my first visit here with my sister. I think it was in 1970, when we came to stay at the White House for the weekend with President and Mrs. Nixon, at the time when the media were busy trying to marry me off to Tricia Nixon. [*Laughter*] And it's very interesting to see the same sort of thing happening to my eldest son. [*Laughter*] So it seems to be an entirely hereditary feature. [*Laughter*]

Mr. President, Sir Winston Churchill, whose mother was, of course, American, and whose bust you have in a place of honor in the Oval Office, once said, after one of his 16 visits to the United States over some 66 years, "The friendliness of the Americans to the traveler from Britain, their unfailing kindness, their generous hospitality are something to marvel at." Well, nothing has changed, Mr. President. We have both most certainly experienced the same generosity and friendliness since our arrival yesterday. And this has been the case on every previous visit I have ever made to this remarkable country.

It is an indication, if I may say so, Mr. President, of how very important and special our close, warm, and enduring relationship with the United States of America is to all of us in the United Kingdom. Our two nations have much in common. We share so much history and tradition, language and culture, and a commitment to democracy and liberty. These enrich the spirit and are founded on those greatest of all gifts—friendship and loyalty.

On Friday, we will meet veterans of our struggle together against evil and tyranny in the Second World War. The selfless service that our parents' generation gave, including, of course, both our fathers—and how wonderful it is, if I may say so, to see President Bush 41 here this evening—and the selfless service that we commemorate in this 60th anniversary year will always stand as a measure of the commitment, courage, and comradeship of our two great nations.

On Thanksgiving Day in 1944, while we were Allies in arms in that global struggle, Sir Winston Churchill looked forward to what he called "a lasting union of sympathy and good feeling and loyalty and hope between all the British and American peoples." Well, that is a vision all of us here share.

And, indeed, that lasting union of sympathy has been so amply demonstrated in our own day when we shared with you the

full horror of September the 11th, 4 years ago, and more recently, when following the terrorist attacks in London, so many of us in the United Kingdom were profoundly touched by the many messages of steadfast support and solidarity from across the United States.

But our visit is not focused only on the misfortunes that have united our nations. We were particularly pleased to have had the chance this afternoon to go with Mrs. Bush to the inspiring SEED School in Anacostia, a school that offers young people from underprivileged backgrounds the chance to fulfill the potential that each person has. And this, incidentally, is what my Prince's Trust has been seeking to do for very nearly 30 years in the United Kingdom, and which has led to over half a million young people being assisted to develop their individual talents and abilities.

And, Mr. President, I am also very conscious of the extraordinary social progress this country has achieved. On the day Rosa Parks is laid to rest, there is a powerful message, I think, here about tolerance and inclusion that has relevance for the whole international community.

My wife and I are deeply grateful to you, Mr. President, and Mrs. Bush for your generous hospitality towards us, but more so, as I am only too conscious of the enormous challenges and responsibilities which face the 43d President of the United States. And I need hardly say that so many people throughout the world look to the United States of America for a lead on the most crucial issues that face our planet and, indeed, the lives of our grandchildren. Truly, the burdens of the world rest on your shoulders.

In conclusion may I propose a toast to you, Mr. President, to Mrs. Bush, and to the people of the United States of America.

[*At this point, the President and Prince Charles offered a toast.*]

NOTE: The President spoke at 7:55 p.m. in the State Dining Room at the White House.

Statement on Senate Passage of Legislation To Reduce Federal Spending
November 3, 2005

Today the Senate took an important step forward in cutting the deficit. I commend Senate leadership and the other Senators who supported this spending reduction legislation, and I congratulate Senator Gregg on its successful passage. Congress needs to send me a spending reduction package this year to keep us on track to cutting the deficit in half by 2009.

Statement on Senate Passage of Energy Legislation
November 3, 2005

Increasing our domestic energy supply will help lower gasoline prices and utility bills. We can and should produce more crude oil here at home in environmentally responsible ways. The most promising site for oil in America is a 2,000 acre site in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, and thanks to technology, we can reach this energy with little impact on the land or wildlife. I applaud the Senate for passing legislation to improve our energy situation with this commonsense approach.

Message to the Senate Transmitting the Protocol Amending the France-United States Taxation Convention
November 3, 2005

To the Senate of the United States:

I transmit herewith for the advice and consent of the Senate to ratification a Protocol Amending the Convention Between the United States of America and the French Republic for the Avoidance of Double Taxation and the Prevention of Fiscal Evasion with Respect to Taxes on Estates, Inheritances, and Gifts, signed at Washington on November 24, 1978 (the "Convention"), signed at Washington on December 8, 2004 (the "Protocol"). Also transmitted for the information of the Senate is the report of the Department of State with respect to the Protocol.

The Protocol provides a pro rata unified credit to the estate of a French domiciliary for purposes of computing U.S. estate tax. It allows a limited U.S. "marital deduction" for certain estates if the surviving spouse is not a U.S. citizen. In addition, the Protocol expands the United States jurisdiction to tax its citizens and certain former citizens and long-term residents and makes other changes to the treaty to reflect more closely current U.S. tax-treaty policy.

I recommend that the Senate give early and favorable consideration to the Protocol and give its advice and consent to ratification.

GEORGE W. BUSH

The White House,
November 3, 2005.

NOTE: This message was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on November 4.

Remarks Following Discussions With President Nestor Kirchner of Argentina in Mar del Plata, Argentina
November 4, 2005

President Kirchner. We have had an eventful meeting with the President of the United States. We have considered issues related to our bilateral relations between Argentina and the U.S. We have considered the situation in the region. We have listened to each other and what we have to say about domestic matters in our respective countries and how our countries are doing at the moment. I think we have been quite candid in our dialog, and we have spoken quite clearly with the President of the United States.

And as President of the Argentine Republic, I am pleased to have had this meeting, during which we have been able to convey to the President of the United States our thoughts on a wide variety of issues.

So in a nutshell, that's what we have dealt with, and I would now like to give the floor to the President of the U.S.

President Bush. Thank you for your hospitality. Laura and I thank you and the Senator for such a warm welcome. This is my first trip to Argentina—I hope it is not my last trip. However, this is not our first meeting. This is our third meeting, and every time we have met, I have come away impressed by your candor, your passion for the people of this beautiful land.

And as we discussed—the first time we met until now, the economy has changed in quite dramatic fashion, thanks to wise

decisions you have made. So congratulations for dealing with a difficult circumstance and making decisions that have improved the lives of your people.

Needless to say, the President was quite firm in his belief that the IMF ought to have a different attitude toward Argentina. He has been an outspoken person for reform. I listened very carefully to his point of view. I was pleased that the United States was helpful during the early part of his term at the IMF, and I suggested that his record is such now that he can take his case to the IMF with a much stronger hand. And so I appreciated the conversation there, and I appreciate your candor.

I also want to thank you, Mr. President, for sending the White Helmets. These were people that came down, health specialists to help some of our folks deal with the devastation caused by Hurricanes Katrina and Rita. It was a gesture of grand friendship, and the American people are grateful. The American people are grateful for the contributions Argentines have made to our country. I mean, we've got all kinds of people in America—Ginobili—I don't know if you've heard of Manu Ginobili. [*Laughter*] He's made a vital contribution to the basketball team from the State in which I live. But he's also a good ambassador for your country, and people of Argentine heritage have contributed mightily to America, and we're grateful for that.

We had a good discussion about a range of issues, as the President said. Argentina and the United States have a lot in common. We both believe in rule of law. We both believe in minority rights. We both believe in free press. We both believe in free religion. We both understand that institutions are important for the embetterment of the people, democratic institutions. At times, those institutions have been under assault in our two countries, and it's important as leaders of our countries—elected leaders—to stand up and defend those institutions.

And so, Mr. President, thank you for that dialog, and thank you for that discussion. The President reminded me that U.S. involvement in the neighborhood is—can be constructive and positive, and I agree. And I reminded him that the best involvement that can happen is when countries make wise decisions to attract investment, that there be consistency in law, which he agrees with, that contracts be honored, that when a person makes an investment, that there is not certainty of success but certainty that the rules won't change, that when a government fights corruption, that government sends a signal to investors, large and small, that this is a good place to take risk.

I also reminded the President, we wouldn't be having this discussion if our respective economies weren't strong. And the United States economy is strong. It's healthy. We've overcome some serious challenges recently. But the investor climate in the United States, the willingness for people to invest is good. And the fact that Argentina is picking up additional direct foreign investment is positive. It shows that the country is making wise decisions.

We're going to talk about jobs later on, and that's an important subject. We discussed the need to make sure education systems were strong and vibrant, in order to make sure people can take advantage of opportunities when they arise.

I was pleased that the President was talking about a very ambitious education program, in terms of increasing expenditures, the percentage of GDP by, I think he said 2010, to be a significant increase. And that's wise. That's called leadership. And it seems like to me that at this summit, that if you believe in the values we discussed and if you understand how to make rational decisions, we ought to share those concepts with other countries. And that's why I'm glad to be down here. This is an opportunity to positively affirm our belief in democracy, in human rights and human dignity.

And so I want to thank you for being a good host. It's not easy to host all these countries. It's particularly not easy to host, perhaps, me. [*Laughter*] But thank you for doing it; you're doing a fine job. [*Laughter*] I'm looking forward to it. I'm looking forward to our meetings. I'm looking forward to this evening's cultural event and dinner, and I've been looking forward to our discussion. It was a good one.

Mr. President, thank you very much. It's an honor to be here.

President Kirchner. Thank you very much for being here. Again, we had a very clear, open, candid meeting. We clearly expressed our own thoughts. And as President of Argentina, I'm leaving this meeting feeling very satisfied because it wasn't a meeting looking for nice words but to speak the truth, and each of us did just that. Thank you very much for being here.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:02 a.m. at the Hermitage Hotel. In his remarks, he referred to Senator Christina Fernandez de Kirchner of Argentina, wife of President Kirchner; and Emanuel D. "Manu" Ginobili, guard, National Basketball Association's San Antonio Spurs. President Kirchner spoke in Spanish, and his remarks were translated by an interpreter. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of these remarks.

Remarks at the Summit of the Americas and an Exchange With Reporters in Mar del Plata

November 4, 2005

The President. Thank you all for coming. I'll answer a couple of questions in a second. I do want to say how pleased I am to be here in Argentina, advancing an agenda that is based upon my belief and our country's belief that there are certain universal values.

One of those values is that free societies are important to the progress of men and women, but free societies also require institutions that are solid and sound, institutions such as the right to worship freely, the right to write, say what you want in the press freely, the right to campaign and express your opinions freely. It's very important that there be solid rule of law and independent judiciary.

And so I'm pleased to be down here. It's a good place to spend Laura's birthday, which is today. I don't know if you knew that—no, I know you didn't, okay—but anyway, don't bring it up when you see her. [*Laughter*]

But it's—I just had a meeting earlier with the Central American countries—young democracies, struggling to succeed, making good progress toward making sure institutions are well-rooted. I say Central American, plus Dominican Republic. And we talked about how pleased we were that we got the free trade agreement through, at least through the United States Congress. Most of the countries have ratified it. We're looking forward to implementing the trade agreement.

I had a good visit with President Kirchner. You know, Argentina is an amazing country. It's a vast land with a lot of natural resources. And he's done a very good job of helping to—helping this economy of theirs and their financial picture improve. And I congratulated him on it. We talked—well, you heard him, I'm not going to repeat what we talked about. We talked about a lot of subjects. It was a good, honest discussion.

And finally, I just met with our friends from the Andean nations. Good, young democracies, again struggling to fight narcotrafficking, and they were very interested in making sure that we didn't forget them and that we continued to pursue a free trade agreement. That was the main topic of discussion. All those countries recognize the importance of having a free trade agreement with the United States, and I assured them that our negotiators are negotiating in good faith and will continue to negotiate in good faith. That's what I've done so far today.

Nedra [Nedra Pickler, Associated Press].

CIA Employee's Identity Disclosure Investigation

Q. Hi, Mr. President. Thank you. Did Karl Rove tell you the truth about his role in the CIA leak case? And do you owe the American people an apology for your administration's assertions that Karl Rove and Scooter Libby weren't involved?

The President. We're going through a very serious investigation. And I will—I have told you before that I'm not going to discuss the investigation until it's completed. And we have got a—my obligation is to set an agenda, and I've done that. And the agenda is fighting and winning the war on terror and keeping the economic vitality and growth alive, dealing with the energy problem, nominating people to the Supreme Court that adhere to the philosophy that I can depend on—Judge Alito being such a person. I noticed today that they've got a date. I'm disappointed in the date but happy they do have a firm date for his confirmation hearing. We've got to recover from the hurricanes. So I've got a lot to do and will continue to focus on the people's business.

Steve [Steve Holland, Reuters].

Q. You've taken a beating in recent weeks, sir. What are you going to do for a fresh start? Are there going to be any staff changes? Would it help if the special prosecutor would wrap up his probe quickly?

The President. Well, again, you're trying to get me to comment on the investigation, which I'm not going to do. And I hope you understand this. It's a serious investigation, and it's an important investigation, but it's not yet over.

Again, I think it's important for the American people to know that I understand my job is to set clear goals and deal with the problems we face. Now, look, we've got an ongoing war on terror, and my administration is working with friends and allies to find these terrorists and bring them to justice before they strike us again. We're fighting the terrorists in Iraq. And as you know, we've got a two-pronged strategy, an important strategy, that one—on the one hand, has a political solution to it, on the other hand has a security solution to it. And we're working hard to achieve those objectives. We're laying what I have called the foundation for peace, because democratic nations don't war; democratic nations will be allies with each other in fighting off an ideology that is dark and grim in its vision and is willing to use murder as its tool.

Elisabeth [Elisabeth Bumiller, New York Times].

Q. Okay, this is not a question about the investigation, but it's about Karl.

The President. It sounds like one, though.

Q. Are there discussions in the White House about whether or not Karl will remain in his job?

The President. Elisabeth, the investigation on Karl, as you know, is not complete. And therefore, I will not comment upon—about him and/or the investigation. Again, I understand the anxiety and angst by the press corps to talk about this. On the other hand, it is a serious investigation, and we take it seriously, and we're cooperating to the extent that the special prosecutor wants us to cooperate.

President's Agenda

Q. The American people, though—sir, the American people, though, are beginning to question your honesty, according to the polls, 58 percent. And your approval rating is at an alltime low, primarily because, it seems, of this investigation. They are wondering whether you can keep on track and whether to believe you, sir.

The President. Well, no, I understand there is a preoccupation by polls by some. I think this may be—I think we've got—this is maybe the fourth or fifth consecutive semi-press conference—press conference or semi-press conference that I've been asked about polls. The way you earn credibility with the American people is to set a clear agenda that everybody can understand, an agenda that relates to their lives, and get the job done. And the agenda that I'm working on now is one that is important to the American people.

First of all is to protect our country, is to understand that we're at war with a radical ideology that wants to inflict harm on America and, at the same time, use that harm they inflict to achieve territorial ambition. I've talked a lot recently about the Zawahiri letter to Zarqawi, which is a clear statement of purpose by these terrorists. It should be viewed for what it is, a open warning to the free world that this is a very vital war, and we need to win it. So I spend a lot of time talking about that—and more than talking about it, acting on it.

Secondly, you know, our economy has shown amazing resilience in the face of natural disaster, as well as rising energy prices. But we've got to have policies in place that make it possible for the economy to continue to grow. You know, we're down here talking about trade. It's hard to trade with somebody if they're broke. And I've told our partners that we've got good economic growth now.

But what we need to do is to work with Congress to make sure that we deal with the energy crisis. What can we do to deal with the energy crisis? Well, we can expand refinery capacity in the United States. I mean, it should be apparent to the Members of Congress that when the—Katrina hit, there was massive disruptions of our own capacity to make gasoline, which put us in a precarious position for the consumers, which would affect the economy, by the way. And so we'll be talking to Congress about a further energy initiative to make sure we've got economic growth. We've obviously got work to do with Katrina and Rita, the damage from those hurricanes.

And I mentioned the Supreme Court. This is a very vital issue for the United States Senate and for the country. Sam Alito, Jr., is an incredibly intelligent, well-qualified person who should be on the Court. I told the leadership I thought it would be best to have the hearings before Christmas. They didn't feel like they could get the job done. I talked to Chairman Specter, and the reason why, at least he explained to me, that he couldn't get the hearings done before Christmas is because Alito had written so many opinions, and he wanted to make sure he had time to read them. And they made that decision. Fortunately, there is a firm date, and we look forward to working on that date.

And finally, an issue that is of concern to the American people is the border—is border security. I signed an appropriations bill for border security and during that signature ceremony talked about our strategy to use technology and border patrol and wise policies to do our job, which is to prevent people from illegally—not only people but, by the way, contraband, guns and drugs—from coming into our country illegally. And so that's the agenda before us, and that's the agenda that I will continue to work on.

One more. Yes, Matt [Matt Cooper, Time].

President Hugo Chavez of Venezuela

Q. Mr. President, you're likely to cross paths with Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez at this summit. How should Americans think about this President, who has said many hostile things about you and your administration? Do you think of him as another Castro? And if you see him this afternoon, do you have any words for him?

The President. Well, I will, of course, be polite. That's what the American people expect their President to do, is to be a polite person. And I will—if I run across him, I will do just that. My attitude toward any leader—toward leaders, and I judge leaders based upon their willingness to protect institutions that will—for a viable democratic society. And to the extent that any leader undermines the free press, we will speak out. To the extent that any leader makes it difficult to worship freely, we will make our positions known. To the extent that the judiciary is not an independent organization—in other words, to the extent that there's not proper checks and balances, we will express our positions.

And there's ways to do so. We can do so through our embassies. We can do so in forums—not necessarily singling out a particular country or person but talking on the positive about how important it is to have checks and balances in society, about how important it is to have these institutions so that a single person cannot become the ruler of all people. I will remind people today at this important summit that—as we talk about poverty and minority rights, which is of concern to many countries here, that one—such concerns are our concerns, and that if you're interested in minority rights, the best way to allow minorities to have rights is in a democratic society, where the people actually make the decisions for government.

And so it's a—I think this is a good forum and a good opportunity to express—for me to express our country's values. But they're not American values, I keep telling you, these are universal values that are true. That's why my meeting with President Kirchner was—one of the reasons it was so positive is because Argentina shares the same values that America shares. They've been through some difficult experiences and making sure that those values are rooted in their societies. Of course I've reminded others, we went through difficult experiences in the past. And we had a Constitution that said everybody is free, but they weren't.

And so it's a—so what I'll search for in the world, as I think about world leaders, is that commitment, firm commitment to values and institutions that make democracy viable.

Thank you all very much. Thanks.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:35 p.m. at the Sheraton Mar del Plata. In his remarks, he referred to President Nestor Kirchner of Argentina; Patrick J. Fitzgerald, U.S. Attorney for the Northern District of Illinois, and Department of Justice CIA leak investigation Special Prosecutor; Ayman Al-Zawahiri, founder of the Egyptian Islamic Jihad and senior Al Qaida associate; and senior Al Qaida associate Abu Musab Al Zarqawi.

Statement on the Launch of a Nationwide Effort To Respond to Hurricanes That Struck Central America

November 4, 2005

Three distinguished private-sector leaders have agreed to launch a nationwide effort to encourage private donations for relief and reconstruction in response to the three

recent hurricanes that struck Central America. These leaders will work with other Americans to raise awareness and resources to help those in need as a result of these disasters.

The business leaders are: Steve Reinemund, chairman and CEO, PepsiCo, Inc.; Bob Lane, chairman and CEO, Deere & Company; and Maria Lagomasino, former chairman and CEO, JPMorgan Private Bank. On behalf of our country, I am grateful to these leaders for their readiness to take on this important effort.

In the coming days, they will ask Americans to donate directly to a fund set up to provide help to the disaster victims.

Message on the Observance of Eid al-Fitr
November 4, 2005

I send warm greetings to American Muslims and Muslims around the world observing Eid al-Fitr, the Festival of Breaking the Fast.

Eid al-Fitr marks the end of Ramadan, a time of prayer, reflection, and fasting. It is the holiest month of the Muslim year. To celebrate this holiday, many Muslims gather in their homes and mosques to thank God for His blessings and His help in keeping the fast. Muslims also demonstrate their compassion by reaching out to the less fortunate and giving gifts of money or food to help those in need. This year, many American Muslims have reached out to the victims of Hurricanes Katrina, Rita, and Wilma and to those affected by the devastating earthquake in South Asia. Their contributions have been generous and reflect the important values shared by all Americans.

Our Nation is blessed to count many Muslims among our fellow citizens. As Americans, we share a commitment to family, a belief in God's justice and man's moral responsibility, and hope for a future of peace and tolerance.

Laura and I send our best wishes for a joyful celebration. Eid Mubarak.

GEORGE W. BUSH

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

The President's Radio Address
November 5, 2005

Good morning. This week I was proud to nominate Judge Sam Alito to be an Associate Justice on the Supreme Court of the United States. Judge Alito is one of America's most accomplished and respected judges. During his long career in public service, he has demonstrated all the qualities that the American people expect in a Supreme Court Justice, mastery of the law, a deep commitment to justice, and great personal character. He is scholarly, fair-minded, and principled, and these traits will serve our Nation well on our highest Court.

Judge Alito now serves on the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit. When he was nominated to his current seat in 1990, Judge Alito received strong bipartisan support, and the United States Senate confirmed him by unanimous consent. He has served on that court with distinction for 15 years and now has more prior judicial

experience than any Supreme Court nominee in more than 70 years.

During his career on the bench, Judge Alito has participated in thousands of appeals and authored hundreds of opinions. He has demonstrated that he understands the proper role of a judge, to interpret the Constitution and laws, not to impose the judge's own preferences or priorities on the people. And in the performance of his duties, Judge Alito's brilliance, his modesty, and his even demeanor have gained him the respect of his colleagues and of the attorneys appearing before him.

Prior to becoming a judge, Sam Alito served for 3 years as the United States Attorney for the District of New Jersey. When President Reagan nominated him to this position in 1987, the Senate confirmed him by unanimous consent. As the top prosecutor in one of the Nation's largest Federal districts, Sam Alito moved aggressively against white-collar and environmental crimes, drug trafficking, organized crime, and violations of civil rights. He showed a passionate commitment to the rule of law, and he gained a reputation for being both tough and fair.

Before becoming U.S. Attorney, Sam Alito served in other critical positions in the Department of Justice. In the Office of Legal Counsel, he provided constitutional advice for the President and the executive branch. As Assistant to the Solicitor General, he argued 12 cases before the Supreme Court. As an Assistant U.S. Attorney, he argued dozens of cases before the Federal courts of appeals.

The son of an Italian immigrant who came to America in 1914, Sam Alito is a product of New Jersey public schools. He was valedictorian and student council president at Hamilton East-Steinert High School in Hamilton, New Jersey. He went on to become a Phi Beta Kappa graduate of Princeton University. He attended Yale Law School and was editor of the Yale Law Journal. After graduating from law school, he was a law clerk for a Federal court of appeals judge. He has served in the Army Reserves, where he achieved the rank of captain. Sam Alito's life has been marked by consistent excellence and achievement, combined with personal decency and a commitment to public service.

The United States Senate will now exercise its constitutional responsibility to advise and consent on Judge Alito's nomination. The process is off to a good start. Since I announced his nomination, Judge Alito has met with many Senators, and they are learning more about his great character, accomplishments, and ability.

Our Nation is fortunate to have a man of Judge Alito's intellect and integrity willing to serve. I look forward to the Senate voting to confirm Judge Alito as the 110th Justice of the Supreme Court of the United States.

Thank you for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 10:45 a.m. on November 2 in the Cabinet Room at the White House for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on November 5. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on November 4 but was embargoed for release until the broadcast. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of this address.

Remarks in a Discussion With Young Leaders in Brasilia, Brazil
November 6, 2005

U.S. Ambassador to Brazil John J. Danilovich. Mr. President, Secretary Rice, fellow Brazilians, I'd like to thank you all for being here this morning. It's a pleasure

for us to welcome you here on this beautiful Sunday morning in Brasilia.

Brazil is a land of promise, of enormous potential, and of great possibilities. And the promise, potential, and possibilities of Brazil are perhaps no more visible than in yourselves. I want to thank you for the opportunity of the President and the Secretary, of meeting with you today. To a large extent, the future of your country lies in your hands, and the President looks forward to discussing things of relevance to Brazil and the United States and our important bilateral relationship. And with that being said, I'd like to turn the——

The President. John, let me say something. The Ambassador is trying to cull me out of the conversation early on. [*Laughter*] Listen, thank you for coming. First, I am here because I want to send a very clear signal to the people of Brazil that the relationship between America and Brazil is an important relationship, that Brazil is a friend, and that Brazil has got an important part of working with America to bring prosperity to not only our own citizens but to help others as well and by doing so, kind of lay the—lay conditions for a peaceful continent.

It's in our interests that our neighborhood be a prosperous neighborhood. It's in our interests that we work with the largest country in the neighborhood. And so I come to not only discuss philosophy and points of view with you but also to meet with President Lula, with whom I've got a good relationship.

He is a person who had to make some tough decisions. That's what leaders have to do; you've got to make tough decisions. And he's made hard decisions for the people of Brazil. He is—the economy is going well here, which is good news. He also has got a good heart. And I share the same concern he has; I share a concern of making sure that the least fortunate among us has a chance to survive and succeed.

And so this is going to be a good trip here, and I'm grateful for you all taking time to come by and visit. I look forward to having a fruitful discussion with you. And we'll start with Carlos.

Participant. Thank you very much, Mr. President. Latin Americans for a long time have had a love-hatred relationship with the U.S. Latin Americans admire the military and economic power of the United States, its popular culture, and many values with which they share. But Latin Americans resist the somewhat missionary nature of U.S. when justifying its international actions—for instance, when the U.S. exports democracy, exports market economies, or even exports civil liberties. This has been really very much criticized or contested, even in this region of the world. The Mar del Plata incidents of a few days ago, during the Summit of the Americas, showed that the mood of the demonstrators may easily go beyond the acceptable limits in—civilization.

My question now: Is the U.S. able to pinpoint the causes for these disagreements that they have with the opinionmakers here in Latin America, and does the U.S. have a clear strategy to change this love and hatred relationship into one of cooperation and friendship?

The President. Well, first of all, I—we met in a society which allows people to express their different points of view. In other words—which is positive—I expect there to be dissent. That's what freedom is all about. People should be allowed to express themselves. And so what happened in Argentina happens in America. That's positive. Can you imagine being in a society where people were not allowed to express their positions?

Secondly, I fully understand there's, at times, a view of America that is, in my opinion, not an accurate view. I mean, you say, "missionary zeal to spread democracy"—I do have a deep desire to help others assume a democracy that is a democracy that conforms to their traditions and their customs. And the reason why is

because the world has seen that democracies do not fight each other.

As an example, war broke out in Europe in the early 1900s, as well as the mid-1900s. And yet we've had no war in Europe since. And one of the reasons why is because the nations of Europe became democracies, not American democracy but democracies that reflected the values of the people in that country—in their countries.

One of the stories I like to share with people—it's an interesting story, and I think an illustration of what I'm trying to do—is that Japan was the sworn enemy of the United States in the late 1940s. My dad was a soldier, Navy pilot, and fighting the Japanese. Today—I'm going to Japan in 2 weeks. I will be sitting down with one of the best friends that I have in the international arena, Koizumi. That's interesting, isn't it? What happened between the time when America was fighting Japan and when, now, Japan is an ally with the United States in dealing with a tyrant in North Korea, for example? And what happened was, Japan adopted a Japanese-style democracy.

And so I am anxious to work with countries to help make sure that the institutions, universal institutions of democracy become entrenched in society: freedom to worship, freedom of the press, rule of law.

I will also tell you, I firmly believe that a society which is democratic is one much more likely to be able to deal with the social ills of a society. I mean, a democracy is one in which minorities have rights and can express themselves through the legislative process. Tyrannies are such that minorities don't have rights, unless you happen to be aligned with the tyrant.

And so, one, I don't think America, nor Brazil, should ever back down from believing in the universality of freedom and democracy. Secondly, I hope that I am able to do so in a way that explains our position, as opposed to alienating people. And one of the reasons I've come to Brazil is to make that eminently clear, that the United States is a friend of Brazil and that our values that we discuss are universal in nature. They apply to Brazil equally as they apply to America.

So very good question, Carlos.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:54 a.m. at the U.S. Embassy. In his remarks, he referred to President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva of Brazil; Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi of Japan; and Chairman Kim Chong-il of North Korea. The participant spoke in Portuguese, and his remarks were translated by an interpreter. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of these remarks. A portion of these remarks could not be verified because the tape was incomplete.

Remarks Following Discussions With President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva of Brazil in Brasilia

November 6, 2005

President Lula da Silva. Your Excellency, George Bush, President of the United States of America, and Mrs. Laura Bush; my dear wife, Marisa Leticia Lula da Silva; ladies and gentlemen; members of the delegations of the U.S. and of Brazil; the journalists from Brazil and journalists from the U.S. and journalists from other countries who are also here: The presence of President Bush here with us expresses to a very high degree the intensification of the dialogs between our governments.

In December 2002, before I took office, President Bush was kind enough to receive

me at the White House. In June 2003, I was with him once again in an important working meeting in Washington. We had several meetings also at international meetings during these almost 3 years that I've been in government. We have exchanged letters, and we have—we've spoke several times over the phone. Today's visit is a privileged opportunity for us to discuss many issues in our bilateral relations, as well as regional and global issues around which we can work together.

I wish to express publicly a few considerations on relations between the U.S. and Brazil in the more general framework of our foreign policy. I have often said that our foreign policy is not just a way of projecting Brazil into the rest of the world; it is also a fundamental element for our nation's project of development.

During these 34 months of my administration, we have worked very hard to come closer to our South American brothers. We have intensified bilateral relations with all countries in the region. We have expanded and strengthened the MERCOSUR. We have created the South American Community of Nations. We have maintained excellent relations with the countries of the Caribbean as well as Central and North America. We have pushed for very active policies in Africa, a continent I have visited several times and been to 14 countries. We are the—our country has the second largest black population in the world, and we have a historical debt to the African Continent.

Brazil has also opened up to the Arab world, the main result of that opening being the summit between South America and Arab countries. We strengthened our relations with major emerging countries such as China, India, Russia, Korea, and South Africa.

We have not stopped opening new frontiers. The results of that opening have been unprecedented growth in our foreign trade, the attraction of new investments, and the internationalization of our own companies. But that quest for new horizons has not compromised our relationships with major developed countries such as the European Union, Japan, and obviously, the United States of America.

When I was elected President, there were those who foresaw the deterioration of relations between Brazil and the U.S. They were roundly mistaken. On the contrary, our relations today are going through one of their best moments ever. Economic and trade relations have expanded very much, and our political dialog has gained a much higher quality. We, the United States and Brazil, understand our economic and political importance as well as the responsibilities they imply. We defend our national interests and our general political values. Our self-respect strengthens our mutual respect. When each country values its own sovereignty, we are able to respect the sovereignty of other countries as well.

The understandable differences and points of view on issues of the regional or global agendas have been discussed frankly, with no surprises or confrontations. I wish to recognize how President Bush, his Secretary of State, and other top officials of the U.S. administration have contributed to making this environment of cordial relations become even better.

Mr. President, our peoples share common outlooks on absolutely fundamental issues, such as the defense of democracy, the spread of freedom, and respect for human rights. We have had dialog on crucial themes for two nations that are committed to the challenges of peace and of globalization. International security, development aid, the balance of trade rules, and the reform of the multilateral system in the United Nations, in particular, have been at the core of our conversations. We have been known how to emphasize our affinities. We are two major, multiethnic democracies, with the vocations for cooperating in promoting full citizenship and fighting all forms of discrimination.

The presence of a large Brazilian community in the U.S. enriches the tradition

of mutual contact and the admiration between our societies. Good dialog between our immigration authorities will be fundamental for guaranteeing fair and balanced treatment for those who are the true bridges between our countries.

We also spoke very much about what we could do to promote the progress and well-being of other countries. We are working hard in favor of development, particularly in Africa. In Haiti, where Brazil is heading the U.N. stabilization mission, we have collaborated in emergency programs in the areas of health and basic sanitation. We are involved in achieving the full success of national elections that will open the way to normality, in political terms, and the return to economic and social development for Haiti. And we are involved—it is also important that the economic aid that's been promised to Haiti arrive quickly.

President Bush and I have the same optimistic vision on our bilateral relations. There have been many advances following our first meeting in 2003. The working groups that we created on growth, agriculture, and energy have brought significant results. And we have now decided to advance in other strategic fields. We will begin high-level cooperation in science and technology and intensify our educational partnerships in areas such as biodiversity and agriculture. In the area of health, we will be opening up new fronts for cooperation to fight diseases such as malaria, tuberculosis, AIDS, and threats such as the avian flu pandemic.

Our partnership is grounded on solid economic basis. The United States are the largest individual partner of Brazil as the largest market for our exports and our main source of direct overseas investment. Our exchange has grown at rates of 7 percent per year. In 2004 alone, we received $4 billion in investments from the United States.

We carry on tranquil and mature discussions on specific issues that always come up as part of any partnership on this scale—on a scale like this. We are working to negotiate the removal of unjustified barriers to our bilateral trade, and we are working in the same spirit to achieve multilateral economic and trade discussions.

The successful conclusion of the Doha round by the end of 2006 is a priority for the United States as much as it is for Brazil. We agree that the reduction, with a view to the elimination of agricultural subsidies, will be a key to balance in that round. I thank President Bush for his words of support for Brazil's determination to contribute to development and stability in our region.

It is for all of these reasons that we are very glad to see the U.S. willingness to include Brazil amongst those countries with whom Brazil—the United States has a strategic and privileged dialog. President Bush, what we leave for history is more than our immediate decisions. What really matters are those initiatives that take into account future generations as well as the need for us to face and overcome the major challenges of our time. Brazilian foreign policy transcends governments.

At the same time we defend our national interest, we pursue major democratic values in the international sphere. In that sense, I once again insist that U.S.-Brazil relations are fundamental, and their improvement is a legacy that we should leave to those who will come after us.

Thank you very much.

President Bush. Mr. President, thank you very much. Laura and I are really pleased to be here on our first visit to Brazil. My only regret is that I'm not able to travel around a lot of your country to see the vast beauty of Brazil. It's a spectacular part of the world, and I want to thank you for your invitation to come here. The President promised to take me fishing—of course, he said, after I'm President. The entourage is a little big to go fishing while I'm President.

But Mr. President, Laura and I appreciate the hospitality that you and Mrs.

Marisa have shown us. We're also looking forward to good old-fashioned Brazilian barbecue. It will remind me of home.

We—let me start off by saying that the President is right: Relations between Brazil and the United States are essential, and they are strong. We've had many constructive discussions. I remember the first time you came to the Oval Office, and I was most impressed by your strong commitment to your program of Zero Hunger. It struck me as not only sincere but reflecting your deep compassion for the people. And since then, we've had the capacity to sit down and talk about issues that are important for not only our respective countries but the world. And I want to thank you for that frank and open relationship.

Brazil and America are interesting places, obviously, but one thing we have in common is that we are a country—two countries that are able to deal with our diversity in such a way as to strengthen our nation. Brazil is a very diverse country, as is America, and it's those common values that we both adhere to that make it feasible for people from different backgrounds to live in peace and harmony. And we discussed those values, the President and I did. He's a man who believes strongly in democracy, as do I, and rule of law and the right of free speech and the right to a free press and free religion. And I want to thank you for your strong belief and your willingness to stand strong on those principles.

We're the two largest democracies in the world [Western World].* Therefore, we have obligations to work together to promote peace and prosperity. We started what's called the Group for Growth, to find ways to develop economic possibilities and potential in our respective countries. I must say, Mr. President, I'm impressed by the economic reforms you've put in place, by the achievements you had made through good government policy to encourage growth, not only here at home but to encourage exports.

We're encouraged by the increase of bilateral trade between our countries. I met with some businesspeople earlier today, and they were talking about how important our markets are to each other and that trade is an important way for people to be able to find work in our countries. And good trade is trade where people benefit on both sides of the issue, that it must be equitable, it must be fair, and I'm convinced that's the trade relationship we have on a bilateral basis.

I know you're concerned about creating jobs, and your country has done a very good job of doing so, while keeping inflation down. And I appreciate your understanding that free trade and fair trade is the way to help the citizens of your country. We can have free and fair trade without losing national identity. We can have free or fair trade without penalizing local small businesses and entrepreneurs. And the President is working hard to make sure that the trade opportunities available to the citizens of Brazil are done in such a way that there's a spirit of—there's an equitable spirit involved. And I want to thank you for your leadership on that.

We've got some opportunities to continue to expand trade. I firmly believe that if one wants to eliminate poverty around the world, the best way to do so is to advance the Doha round of the WTO. Now, the President has made it very clear that it's difficult to get a Doha round going so long as there are countries that refuse to yield on agricultural matters, and I heard that loud and clear. And so recently, I made a statement, or a series of statements, that said the United States will reduce subsidies and tariffs, so long as we get the same treatment from trading partners such as Europe. In other words, I just—if we lower the subsidies, we would very much like to be able to tell our farmers the same thing the President wants to tell his farmers, that there's access to markets. And so

* White House correction.

we made a very strong statement toward advancing the Doha round, the WTO. We've declared our intention, and I told the President I was very serious in that declaration.

And we agreed to work together to advance the round. It's in the workers of Brazil's interest that WTO advance. This is a vast country with great resources and a workforce that's hardworking, and the more products that Brazilians can manufacture and sell overseas, the better—more likely it is people will be able to find work. And so one of the interesting things that has come out of this meeting is a renewed commitment to working together to eliminate poverty by creating opportunity through international trade that's fair, that's fair for the people of Brazil and fair for the people of America.

And along those lines, we continued our discussions that was taking place in Argentina. There is an opportunity to advance trade, and we agreed to speak about that and how best to work together, for example, to be able to compete with countries like China or India. It's in our interests that we work together on a trade agenda. I call it the Free Trade Agreement of the Americas; I think you refer to it as ALCA. And the President said, "Look, let's work together on Doha and see how that goes, and we'll continue to working on the Free Trade Agreement of the Americas."

It's important for the people of Brazil to understand that such an agreement will not be done if the President thinks this isn't in the interests of the people. I've got to—he's got to be convinced, just like the people of America must be convinced, that a trade arrangement in our hemisphere is good for jobs, its good for the quality of life. And so I look forward to continue to work on international matters and regional matters as well as bilateral matters, Mr. President.

I want to thank you for your leadership around the world and in the hemisphere. I want to thank you very much for your commitment to Haiti. There's elections coming up soon, and the Brazilian presence there has made it more likely those elections will go forward in a free and fair way. You're a—you've taken a responsible position, and I hope your country is proud of the fact that you've seized this moment.

I want to thank you as well for working on HIV/AIDS with the United States. Like you, we share a deep commitment to help those who suffer from this pandemic. And like you, we do more than talk; we act. And as a result of our combined efforts, hundreds of thousands of people are getting antiretroviral drugs, and that's important, and I want to thank you for that.

One of the things that I appreciate about the President is he fully understands that narcotrafficking and terrorism can disrupt the democratic way of life. And Brazil has been strong—strong in working with other countries to prevent a few criminals or thugs from disrupting our way of life, and done so with constitutional guarantees in mind. We always keep human rights in the forefront of our policy. But we also know that we must work together to prevent those who would murder the innocent or those who would pollute the bodies of our young from being able to do so. And I want to thank you again for your leadership on that.

This has been a constructive trip, constructive because, Mr. President, I enjoy working with you, constructive because you're frank in our discussions, and constructive because together we can do some good for not only our own people but for the world. Thank you very much, sir.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:22 p.m. at the Granja do Torto. In his remarks, he referred to Marisa Leticia Lula da Silva, wife of President Lula da Silva. President Lula da Silva spoke in Portuguese, and his remarks were translated by an interpreter. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of these remarks.

Remarks on Democracy in the Americas in Brasilia
November 6, 2005

Thank you. *Boa tarde.* Thank you for coming. This is my first trip to Brazil, and Laura and I are really pleased to be here in your capital city. We've had a magnificent stay, had a great visit with President Lula. It's an important visit because Brazil and the United States are close friends. And that's the way it should be. Plus the President and the First Lady gave us an unbelievably good barbeque. [*Laughter*] I also commend the President for his commitment to improving the lives of the people here in Brazil.

Our two nations share many things in common. We are both children of the New World, founded in empire and fulfilled in independence. We're united by history and geography. We share the conviction that the future of our hemisphere must be a future of justice and freedom.

Only a generation ago, this was a continent plagued by military dictatorship and civil war. Yet the people of this continent defied the dictators, and they claimed their liberty. We saw the dramatic evidence at the Summit of the Americas that President Lula and I just attended. The delegates from 34 countries that came to this conference all represent democratic governments.

Freedom is the gift of the Almighty to every man and woman in this world, and today, this vision is the free consensus of a free Americas. It is a vision that is written into the founding document of the Organization of American States, which calls this hemisphere—calls on the hemisphere "to offer to man a land of liberty and a favorable environment for the realization of his just aspirations." It is the vision that is given clear direction in the Inter-American Democratic Charter, which declares, "The peoples of the Americas have a right to democracy and their governments have an obligation to promote and defend it." And it is a vision that puts what was once a distant dream within our reach, an Americas wholly free and democratic and at peace with ourselves and our neighbors.

As the largest democracy in South America, Brazil is a leader, and today, Brazil is exercising its leadership across the globe. In Africa, Brazil is working to defeat the scourge of HIV/AIDS by partnering with America to improve treatment and care and prevention in Portuguese-speaking nations like Mozambique. In this hemisphere, Brazil leads the coalition of the United Nations peacekeeping forces who are helping to restore peace and stability in Haiti. And here at home, Brazil aspires to set an example for the continent by building a just social order where the blessings of liberty are enjoyed by every citizen of this great nation.

Ensuring social justice for the Americas requires choosing between two competing visions. One offers a vision of hope. It is founded on representative government, integration into the world community, and a faith in the transformative power of freedom in individual lives. The other seeks to roll back the democratic progress of the past two decades by playing to fear, pitting neighbor against neighbor, and blaming others for their own failures to provide for their people. The choices we make will determine which vision will define the Americas our children inherit, and we must make tough decisions today to ensure a better tomorrow.

As you work for a better tomorrow, Brazil must know you have a strong partner in the United States. Like you, we aspire for a hemisphere where the dignity of every human being is respected. Like you, we believe that the poor and disenfranchised have a special claim on our attention. And like you, we know that we must make good on the promises of democracy. In the

Americas of the 21st century, freedom is the gateway to social justice, and democracies old and new must work together to build a hemisphere that delivers hope and opportunity for every citizen.

Our common ideal of social justice begins with self-government. The promise of democracy starts with national pride and independence and elections, but it does not end there. A country that divides into factions and dwells on old grievances cannot move forward and risks sliding back into tyranny. A country that unites all its people behind common ideals will multiply in strength and confidence. The successful democracies of the 21st century will not be defined by blood and soil. Successful democracies will be defined by a broader ideal of citizenship, based on shared principles and shared responsibilities and respect for all.

For my own country, the process of becoming a mature, multiethnic democracy was lengthy. My country's journey from national independence to equal justice for all meant overcoming the enslavement of millions and a 4-year civil war. Even after slavery ended, a century passed before the guarantee of equal rights under the law was finally made real. Racial division almost destroyed my country, and the citizens of the United States learned the false doctrine of "separate but equal" was no basis for a strong and unified America. The only way my country found to rise above the injustices of our history was to reject segregation, to move beyond mere tolerance, and to affirm the brotherhood of all people in our land.

Each democracy has its own character and culture that reflect its unique traditions and history. Yet all free and successful countries share some common characteristics: Freedom to worship, freedom of the press, freedom of speech, economic liberty, equal justice under the rule of law, equal citizenship for all, and the limitation of state power through checks and balances. In many parts of our hemisphere, these institutions of a free society are still young, and they are fragile, and we must ensure that they are strong for the tasks ahead. To deliver justice, the people must have confidence in their institutions, and we must replace the rule of man with the rule of law.

Some today suggest that democracy has outlived its usefulness. They have misread history. The Americas has declared democracy indispensable for the exercise of human rights. It is the only region in the world that imposes an obligation to defend democracy. For all the growing pains, it is a miracle of history that this young century finds us speaking about the consolidation of freedom throughout our hemisphere. We must continue our work to help strengthen the institutions of liberty because we know that freedom is the only way to ensure that our citizens can lead lives of purpose and dignity. And without democracy there can be no social justice, because only democracy offers a place at the table for every member of society.

Our common ideal of social justice must include a better life for all our citizens. As elections and democracies have spread across our hemisphere, we see a revolution in expectations. In free societies, citizens will rightly insist that people should not go hungry, that every child deserves the opportunity for a decent education, and that hard work and initiative should be rewarded. And with each new generation that grows up in freedom and democracy, these expectations rise and the demands for accountability grow. Either democracies will meet these legitimate demands, or we will yield the future to the enemies of freedom.

The nations of this hemisphere have a moral obligation to help others. They have a moral obligation to educate their children and to provide decent health care. We have a moral duty to make sure our actions are effective. At Monterrey in 2002, the world agreed to a new vision for the way we

fight poverty and curb corruption and provide aid in this new millennium. Developing countries agreed to take responsibility for their own economic progress through good governance and sound practices and the rule of law, and developed countries agreed to support these efforts.

My country has sought to implement the Monterrey consensus by changing the way we deliver aid. We have established a new Millennium Challenge Account that increases aid for nations that govern justly, that invest in the education and health of their people, and promote economic freedom. Recently we signed compacts delivering aid—Millennium Challenge aid to Honduras and Nicaragua. This new aid will help those countries improve their roads and diversify their crops and strengthen property rights and make their rural businesses more competitive. And in the years ahead, under the leadership of Ambassador Danilovich, we hope more countries will follow their example.

My country has also stepped up to meet the humanitarian challenges facing our region and the world by providing millions of dollars bilaterally, especially for education of the children. We understand that you cannot achieve economic prosperity and social justice without educating the children of a country. We also support the Global Fund for HIV/AIDS, to provide care and prevention and support for those suffering from the pandemic. At the 2004 special summit in Mexico, the leaders of our hemisphere, including President Lula and me, made a commitment to provide lifesaving treatment for at least 600,000 individuals by the next Summit of the Americas. We worked together. We have shown our words are not empty promises. We have helped deliver treatment to more than 670,000 people in this hemisphere, which surpasses our goal of helping those with HIV/AIDS. And there is more work to be done.

As we expand and improve aid, we are also working to improve the Inter-American Development Bank. Since it was established, this bank has played a major role in the economic development of Latin America and the Caribbean. But as the economies of the Americas further develop, the bank has to change with them. The beginning of President Moreno's tenure gives us a great opportunity to modernize the bank by taking better advantage of global capital markets and by tailoring the bank's programs to the real needs of the growing economies on this continent. The private sector is the engine of growth and job creation in this region. The bank must greatly strengthen its role in private sector investment, especially in small businesses, which are the backbone of a healthy and growing economy. I have asked the United States Treasury Secretary John Snow to work with his counterparts in the hemisphere and at the bank to implement reforms that will ensure that the bank better addresses the needs for economic growth and job creation. They will also discuss a range of options, including giving grants and debt relief for the poorest of nations.

Increasing aid and relieving debt are important parts of our efforts to lift the burden of poverty from places of suffering, yet they are not enough. Our goal is to promote opportunity for people throughout the Americas, whether you live in Minnesota or Brazil. And the best way to do this is by expanding free and fair trade.

The United States, Mexico, and Canada took a first step with what's called NAFTA. And trade between our countries has tripled in 10-year period. Our hemisphere has sought to build on this example by committing ourselves to the Free Trade of the Americas that would eliminate barriers across the entire hemisphere, and I appreciate President Lula's discussion with me today about working to see if we can't make that become a reality. The United States has also made substantial advances toward the goal of hemispheric free trade through bilateral trade agreements with partners such as Chile. And 3 months ago, we

passed through our Congress a trade agreement with the nations of Central America and the Dominican Republic that gives the people of that region jobs and opportunities that come with freer trade and more investment.

And at this moment, we're working hard to advance negotiations with the Andean countries and Panama. By working for free and—I repeat—fair trade across this hemisphere, we will bring all our people into the expanding circle of development. We'll make it easier for those of us who live in this hemisphere to compete with countries like China and India. But most importantly, trade means jobs for people.

The best opportunity to deliver the blessings of trade to every citizen in this hemisphere is the Doha round of negotiations in the World Trade Organization. A successful Doha round will open up markets for farm products and services and industrial goods across this hemisphere and across the globe. Under Doha, every nation will gain, and the developing world stands to gain the most. The World Bank estimates that if the Doha round passes, 300 million people will be lifted from poverty. We know that from history that developing nations that open themselves up to trade grow at several times the rate of countries that practice protectionism. And the stakes are high—they're really high. The lives and futures of millions of poor people across the globe hang in the balance, and so we must bring the Doha trade talks to a successful conclusion.

The greatest obstacles to a successful Doha round are the countries that stand firm in the way of dismantling the tariffs and barriers and trade-distorting subsidies that isolate the poor on this continent from the great opportunities of the 21st century. Only an ambitious reform agenda in agriculture and manufactured goods and services can ensure that the benefits of free and fair trade are enjoyed by all people in all countries.

We agree with Brazil that the agricultural negotiations will unlock the full potential of the Doha round. Your President has criticized the agricultural subsidies that the developed world pays to its farmers, trade-distorting subsidies that undercut honest farmers in the developing world. I agree with President Lula, and the United States is leading the way to address this problem.

My administration has offered a bold proposal for Doha that would substantially reduce agricultural tariffs and trade-distorting subsidies, in a first stage, and over a period of 15 years, eliminate them altogether. Leaders who are concerned about the harmful effects of high tariffs and farm subsidies must move the Doha round forward. And leaders who want to make progress on agricultural subsidies must use their influence to help the WTO make progress on all aspects of the Doha round. By completing Doha, we will help build an Americas that lives in liberty, trades in freedom, and grows in prosperity.

Finally, our common ideal is—of social justice requires safety and security for all our citizens. In many parts of this hemisphere, drug lords and terrorists and criminal gangs corrupt democratic societies. When these groups are more powerful than the state, there can be no social justice. So the United States is working with affected countries to restore the rule of law and ensure the safety of ordinary citizens. We are working with the Government of Mexico to stop the smugglers who traffic in everything from guns to human beings. We are helping President Uribe and the Colombian people defeat the cocaine cartels and narcoterrorists. We're providing money to help honest farmers grow legitimate crops. We're working with our partners in this region to stop terrorist organizations from using this hemisphere as a base to launder money and to provide support for their operations across the globe.

By protecting the people of the Americas from those who operate outside the law,

we strengthen democracy, we promote social justice, and we make prosperity more likely. Citizens who live in fear for their lives because of drug lords and terrorists and criminal gangs are not free citizens. So we must continue to work for the day that all citizens can count on their governments to protect them from criminals and advance the peace and stability that can only come from freedom.

In the last half-century, the nations of the Americas have overcome enormous challenges, colonialism and communism and military dictatorship. The progress we have achieved is the result of tremendous sacrifice and leadership. One such leader was the man who built this beautiful capital as the symbol of Brazilian democracy. President Kubitschek was forced into exile when antidemocratic forces seized control in Brazil. His dream, he said, was to live and die in a free country. At the start of this hopeful new century, the dream of this proud patriot inspires citizens not only in this country but all around the continent.

The citizens of the Americas look to us, the elected leaders, to make his dream a reality and to lead by example. Governments across this hemisphere must be strong, must listen to the people, and must not squander their money. Governments across this hemisphere must be free of corruption. Governments across this hemisphere must be accountable, and we must live by the same standard we set for others. By making the blessings of freedom real in our hemisphere, we will advance the cause of social justice and set a shining example for the rest of the world.

Thank you for allowing me to come and address you. May God bless Brazil. May God continue to bless our Nation, America. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 4:23 p.m. at the Blue Tree Park Hotel. In his remarks, he referred to President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva of Brazil, and his wife, Marisa Leticia Lula da Silva; Luis Alberto Moreno Mejia, president, Inter-American Development Bank; and President Alvaro Uribe Velez of Colombia. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of these remarks.

Joint Statement on the Occasion of the Visit by President George W. Bush to Brazil

November 5–6, 2005

1. Presidents George W. Bush and Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva underscored the increasingly strong and close ties that Brazil and the United States enjoy, based on common values and objectives, including the promotion of democracy, development, economic growth, trade liberalization, international security and combating terrorism. They recognized the link between development, peace, security, human rights and social justice. They reaffirmed their commitment to further strengthen the bilateral relationship based on these principles and to deepen the two nations' ongoing strategic dialogue on democracy, development, and other key shared priorities.

2. The Presidents underscored the priority that both governments attach to reforming the United Nations to make it more effective and attuned to present day realities. They agreed to work together on issues such as management reform and the creation of a Human Rights Council and a Peacebuilding Commission. They further committed to coordinate closely on the issue of Security Council reform, which they agreed was an important component

of reform. They also reaffirmed their commitment to fighting hunger and poverty, promoting democratic values and fostering economic development and emphasized the importance of implementing the Monterrey Consensus on Financing for Development and the Millennium Development Goals.

3. They agreed to work together within the Community of Democracies to promote improved governance, regional and transregional dialogues, development and poverty alleviation. Brazil and the United States also agreed to make greater efforts to cooperate in the promotion of equal opportunity, democratic values and diversity in the workforce, taking into account the multiethnic and multicultural nature of their societies.

4. The Presidents also reaffirmed their commitment to working to ensure a positive outcome at the WTO Ministerial Conference, to be held in Hong Kong in December 2005 as well as the successful conclusion of the Doha Round by the end of 2006. In this context, President Lula welcomed the statement delivered by President Bush in the 2005 UN High Level Plenary Meeting, reaffirming that the United States is ready to eliminate all tariffs, subsidies and other barriers to the free flow of goods and services as other nations do the same.

5. The Presidents noted with satisfaction the growth of bilateral trade and investment between the U.S and Brazil. They committed themselves to encourage the public and private sectors of their respective countries to increase and diversify the bilateral flows of goods and services. To this end, they expressed their hope to substantially increase trade by 2010.

6. Reaffirming the WTO Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS), they acknowledged that the protection and enforcement of intellectual property rights should contribute to the promotion of technological innovation and to the transfer and dissemination of technology, and to a balance of rights and obligations, to the mutual advantage of producers and users of technological knowledge and in a manner conducive to social and economic welfare. The leaders agreed to promote innovation and technological advancement by providing strong intellectual property protection and effective enforcement of intellectual property rights. The Presidents also reaffirmed the Doha Declaration on Trips and Public Health.

7. They agreed to strengthen bilateral cooperation to combat the narcotics trade, trafficking in wildlife, terrorism, and money laundering, with an emphasis on information sharing between the two countries' financial intelligence units and the design of mechanisms to recover assets derived from transnational crimes.

8. As Co-Chairs of the Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA) process, the Presidents noted the importance of continuing efforts to promote trade liberalization and reaffirmed their commitment to the FTAA process, based on the Miami framework, and look forward to a hemispheric meeting for the timely resumption of the negotiations. They also observed that the efforts towards integration in South America, such as Mercosur and the South American Community of Nations (CASA), are important tools for the promotion of prosperity, stability and democracy in the region. Likewise, they noted that closer ties between South American countries also contribute to the objective of regional integration in Latin America and the Americas as a whole.

9. The two Presidents stated their intent to work together to address specific challenges facing the Americas and other regions. Presidents Bush and Lula expressed support for working in partnership with Africans to promote peace, democracy and prosperity across the continent of Africa.

10. With regard to health, they recognized the need to provide greater structure to the bilateral dialogue and expressed the desire to carry out joint activities to combat

HIV/AIDS, malaria, and tuberculosis; to develop strategies for the prevention and control of non-communicable diseases; and to address the threat of avian influenza.

11. The Presidents expressed their commitment to ensure that political stability, democracy, and development take firm root in Haiti. Brazil and the United States closely follow the development of the electoral process in Haiti and express their confidence that a new democratically elected President will take office on February 7, 2006.

12. The Presidents noted with satisfaction the activities of the working groups on economic growth, agriculture and energy established in June 2003, as well as the Consultative Mechanism on Trade and Investment established in 2001. The Presidents also committed to intensify existing dialogues and cooperation in science and technology, education, the environment, and promotion of trade and investment. They agreed to:

(a) convene the Joint Commission provided for in the 1984 Bilateral Agreement relating to Cooperation in Science and Technology and reinvigorate medium- and long-term activities in areas such as earth, atmospheric, and space sciences, health, biodiversity, and agriculture;

(b) renew the current Memorandum of Understanding, continuing the "Partnership in Education;"

(c) elevate current dialogue on the protection of the environment and sustainable management of natural resources; and

(d) establish an informal consultative mechanism between the Ministry of Development, Industry, and Trade and the Department of Commerce.

13. The Presidents reaffirmed their friendship and their commitment to further strengthening ties between the two nations to foster freedom, democracy, security and prosperity.

NOTE: The transcript was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on November 6. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language version of this joint statement. An original was not available for verification of the content of this joint statement.

The President's News Conference With President Martin Torrijos Espino of Panama in Panama City, Panama
November 7, 2005

President Torrijos Espino. A very good morning, esteemed journalists. I'm pleased to welcome you, to welcome the President of the United States to Panama.

On this rainy morning, we've had a work meeting with President Bush, and we've had the opportunity to exchange viewpoints on various subjects of interest to Panama as well as of interest to the United States. We've discussed the advantages and opportunities offered by free trade, and we've reviewed our agenda, starting with past April's visit when I had the opportunity to visit President Bush in Washington.

Panama has had a special relationship with the United States throughout the various stages of its history, and the President and I are committed to maintain and strengthen this through dialog and through an open relationship such as we have had so far. There will not always be agreement, such as in the unexploded ordinance issue, but there will always be a frankness, sincerity between us so that we can discuss

as friends on the various viewpoints of our countries.

In a few moments, I'll have the opportunity to take President Bush to the Miraflores Locks. This will be the first time that a sitting U.S. President—the first time a sitting U.S. President left the United States, he did so to observe the construction of the Panama Canal. And today the President of the United States, George W. Bush, will have the opportunity to see how we Panamanians feel proud not only of the process of reversion of the Panama Canal from U.S. to Panamanian hands, but we also feel proud of the way the canal is being managed and of the opportunities that it will offer into the future.

Welcome, Mr. President. And we will now offer an opportunity for press from both sides to ask a couple of questions.

President Bush. I look forward to going to the Panama Canal. I am most impressed by the management of the canal. Those who are responsible for the Panama Canal have done an excellent job, and this is beneficial to the world, and I congratulate you for that. And I'm really looking forward to seeing it.

I'm also looking forward to paying our respects to—by laying a wreath. I'm also looking forward to seeing some of the Panamanian baseball stars. People around here know how to play baseball, and I'm looking forward to seeing some of your stars, Mr. President. So thanks for letting us come. Thanks for inviting me.

We have had a very good discussion, and it's important we have discussions, because we're friends. And one of the matters we discussed was, how do we work together to improve the lives of our respective citizens? And one way is through trade. We're in the midst of negotiating a free trade agreement with Panama. And I told the President this free trade agreement is important for America, as he told me it's important for Panama. And we're close to coming to an agreement, and we'll continue to work on that agreement for the good of our respective peoples.

I also told him that I was pleased with the leadership of Panama and Argentina. Twenty-nine nations said, loud and clear, "It's important for us to continue to advance a trade agenda that is positive for the people of this hemisphere." And I appreciated your Government's stance on that, Mr. President. You're acting in the interest of your people.

And speaking about the interest of the people, I do want to say something about the tornadoes that recently hit America. I had the—I called the Governor of Indiana this morning and expressed my deepest condolences for the families who lost lives. I asked him if there was more Federal response needed. He felt like the response that we had given was appropriate at the time. And many Americans are now asking God's blessings on those who suffered through this natural disaster.

Mr. President, I'm fully aware that 25,000 of our citizens live in your beautiful country. I can see why. It is a beautiful country. Panama City is a modern, progressive city, and your Government is a modern, progressive Government. I congratulate you for your fiscal reforms. I congratulate you for the strong growth of your economy. I appreciate your transparency. I appreciate your strong commitment to fighting corruption. It sends a clear signal not only to the people of this important country but also to people throughout the region. And it's noble, and it's important that you continue, which I know you will, your very strong leadership.

I look forward to continuing to discuss ways for us to fight narcotrafficking. You've been strong in that. And that's important for our hemisphere, not to allow the narcotraffickers and narcoterrorists to be able to threaten the stability of democracies. I also appreciate your strong commitment to democracy, itself, rule of law, and freedom to worship, freedom of the press, the ability for government to be

transparent, and governments to have checks and balances so that we deal with the rule of law, not the rule of man. And it's your example, which is an important example for others to see.

And again, I want to thank you very much for your leadership. I also thank you very much for helping another part of the world become free and democratic, and that's in Iraq. And I appreciate the supervisors that you sent to help monitor the elections, to see to it that those—the vote on the constitution is free and fair. And I congratulate you for that. It's an important gesture, recognizing that—a gesture that recognizes that freedom is universal in its application and that democracy is the best way to lay the groundwork for peace.

And I finally want to thank you very much for the condolences and offers of assistance you gave to our people after Hurricane Katrina. You're indeed a good friend, and I'm proud to be here to confirm that friendship.

President Torrijos Espino. Thank you.

We would at this time open the floor to two questions per side for the journalist group.

Panama-U.S. Free Trade Agreement/ Unexploded Ordinance

Q. Good morning. You discussed the free trade agreement. There's been some remarks, Mr. President, in regard that your support in Congress has lessened and that the CAFTA was approved by a very narrow margin. What are the real probabilities of getting support in Congress for the ratification of a free trade agreement between Panama and the United States?

And there's also concern in Panama regarding the subject of the unexploded ordinance in areas contaminated in Emperador, San Jose, et cetera, and the commitment from the United States as to whether those areas can be decontaminated.

President Bush. Let me start with the chances of getting an agreement passed. The first step is to get the agreement done, and we're getting close. And I—we talked to Trade Minister Portman yesterday on the way here to Panama. He understands how—the importance I place and the priority I place on this agreement. And we just got to continue to work it and get it done.

Secondly, we're going to have to work the Congress. We talked about working the Congress. It's—I'll do my best to work in the Congress, and the Panamanian Government understands that once we get an agreement, that ministers and friends and allies of Panama will go work the Congress. And one area that we need to make progress on is with the Democrat Party. The Democrat Party is a free—for many sessions, was a free trade party. Not totally, but they had—let me rephrase that—the Democrat Party had free trade members who are willing to make the right decisions based not on politics but based on what's best for the interest of the country. And that spirit has dissipated in recent votes, and Panama can help reinvigorate the spirit. We can help to make sure this isn't just such a partisan issue that people are unwilling to make a vote based upon their principle and what's right for our respective countries.

Secondly, we had obligations under the treaty, and we felt like we met those obligations. There is a difference of opinion, and so we have a disagreement that we will continue to discuss. And we're able to do so in a way that I think is constructive, because we're friends.

Deb [Deb Riechmann, Associated Press].

CIA Employee's Identity Disclosure Investigation

Q. Back in October of 2000, Mr. President——

President Bush. October of 2000?

Q. Yes, sir. Back in October of 2000, this is what you said——

President Bush. Okay. Whew.

Q. "We will ask not only what is legal but what is right, not what the lawyers

allow but what the public deserves." In the CIA leak case, has your administration lived up to this campaign promise?

President Bush. In the—pardon my—I didn't hear you.

Q. In the CIA leak case, has your administration lived up to this campaign promise?

President Bush. Oh, Deb, look, I said the other day to the press corps that was assembled in Argentina that there's still an ongoing investigation. We take this investigation very seriously, and we'll continue to cooperate during the investigation.

Panama Canal/Free Trade of the Americas Agreement

Q. Thank you, Mr. President. President Bush, how would the United States look upon mainland China's participation in the subject of the widening of the Panama Canal? And would this participation affect interests of the United States?

And on the other hand, in the recent FTAA summit held in South America, there were deep divisions, and what do you feel these deep divisions are all about, these ideological issues among the countries of MERCOSUR?

President Bush. First let me start with the Panama Canal. I think it is wise for the Government to consider modernizing the canal. It's—things have changed since the canal was first built, and there needs to be a continued appraisal of the canal to make sure that it is—it's used. It's in the nation's interest that this canal be modernized. And so I—we didn't discuss the financing mechanisms, but I'm confident that however the widening is—the modernization is financed, that the Government and the—those authorities over the canal recognize that it is to be used by everybody, that the canal is international, that there ought to be equal access. It's in the interest of those who run the canal not only to modernize it but to make sure it's used properly.

At the FTAA, 29 countries—I mean, at the summit on the FTAA, 29 countries said, "Let's make sure in 2006, we continue discussing a way forward for the FTAA"—29 of the 34 countries. There was a strong approval for the concept of working together to put agreements in place that will enable us to compete with China in the long run, for example. And so I found the spirit for free trade to be strong. There was five nations that said, "Well, we don't want to do it as soon as 2006." On the other hand, I went to Brazil yesterday, and there was strong agreement in Brazil that we work together to advance the Doha round of the WTO.

The impression I came away with, which is an accurate impression is, is that there's a lot of people who recognize—by far, the vast majority of countries recognize it's in our nations' interests to advance the trade agenda.

Let's see here. Toby [Tabassum Zakaria, Reuters].

War on Terror

Q. Mr. President, there has been a bit of an international outcry over reports of secret U.S. prisons in Europe for terrorism suspects. Will you let the Red Cross have access to them? And do you agree with Vice President Cheney that the CIA should be exempt from legislation to ban torture?

President Bush. Our country is at war, and our Government has the obligation to protect the American people. The executive branch has the obligation to protect the American people; the legislative branch has the obligation to protect the American people. And we are aggressively doing that. We are finding terrorists and bringing them to justice. We are gathering information about where the terrorists may be hiding. We are trying to disrupt their plots and plans. Anything we do to that effort, to that end, in this effort, any activity we conduct, is within the law. We do not torture.

And therefore, we're working with Congress to make sure that as we go forward, we make it possible—more possible to do our job. There's an enemy that lurks and

plots and plans and wants to hurt America again. And so, you bet, we'll aggressively pursue them. But we will do so under the law. And that's why you're seeing members of my administration go and brief the Congress. We want to work together in this matter. We—all of us have an obligation, and it's a solemn obligation and a solemn responsibility. And, you know, I'm confident that when people see the facts, that they'll recognize that we've—they've got more work to do and that we must protect ourselves in a way that is lawful.

Mr. President, thank you.

NOTE: The President's news conference began at 9:25 a.m. at the Casa Amarilla. In his remarks, he referred to Gov. Mitch Daniels of Indiana. President Torrijos Espino and some reporters spoke in Spanish, and their remarks were translated by an interpreter. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of this news conference.

Remarks in a Discussion on Panama's Future in Panama City
November 7, 2005

Mr. President, thank you for your invitation. I told the President earlier I was really looking forward to stopping here in Panama for a variety of reasons. First, I'm proud of the job he's done. He's fought corruption. He's been a strong fiscal steward of the people's money. This economy is growing.

Secondly, I wanted to see the Panama Canal. It's a marvel. It's a fantastic opportunity to see this great engineering feat. And at my press availability today, I said how proud I was of the people of Panama for managing this canal in a professional way, for the good of commerce around the world.

Thirdly, I think it's very important for us always to reconfirm the importance of democracy in our hemisphere. And Panama is a strong democracy, a democracy that believes in the freedom to worship, the freedom to speak, the freedom of the press, the notion that everybody has got a voice. And so it's an opportunity to say thank you for those of you who are working so strong to make sure your democracy flourishes.

So Laura and I are really thrilled to be here. It's been a magnificent trip. I'm sorry it's not longer. I told the President, after I'm President, I'll come back and go fishing with him. [*Laughter*] In the meantime, thanks for having us. I'm proud to be here.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:30 a.m. at Salon Miraflores. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of these remarks.

Remarks at a Rally for Gubernatorial Candidate Jerry Kilgore in Richmond, Virginia
November 7, 2005

The President. Thank you all very much. Thanks for the kind introduction, Governor. We're not taking anything for granted. Laura and I are here to ask you to turn out the vote tomorrow for Jerry Kilgore

as the Governor of the Commonwealth of Virginia.

I want to thank you all for coming out tonight. I remember what it's like to be right there on election eve. This man has worked his heart out. He has traveled the great Commonwealth of Virginia talking common sense to the voters, and now it's your time. He's counting on you to get out and turn out the vote and deliver a great victory on behalf of all people of Virginia by putting him in the Governor's chair.

I appreciate you coming out here to the airport. See, we were just flying in from Latin America. Decided to stop a little short of our destination. See, I know a man of character and integrity, and he's standing right next to me. And that's Jerry Kilgore.

When you find a man who's got this kind of character, it makes sense to stop short of the destination to come in and to say to the people of this State, "Put him in office, and you'll be proud of the job he'll do for you."

He's got a record. See, you can count on him. You know where he stands, and you know he can get the job done. And equally important, you know he doesn't need to run a poll to tell him what to think.

Audience members. Jerry! Jerry! Jerry!

The President. He's got a clear agenda. That's what you want in somebody running for Governor. You got to know where they stand, not yesterday but today and tomorrow. See, you got to understand that this is a guy who thinks clearly, and when he says something, he means what he says.

And so I hope you'll work hard tomorrow to call up your friends and neighbors and tell them they have a duty in this democracy of ours to vote. And tell them if they want good government, good, solid, sound, conservative government to put this good man in the Governor's chair in Richmond.

And while you're putting in Jerry Kilgore, make sure you put in Bill Bolling to be the next Lieutenant Governor and Bob McDonnell to be the next attorney general.

You know, Laura and I are thrilled to be here with Jerry and Marty. I like a guy who loves his wife. I sure love mine. We celebrated our 28th wedding anniversary in Argentina. I told her if she married me, I'd take her to—I'd celebrate our anniversary in exotic places.

I appreciate very much Marty standing by and working in this campaign. I know how tough it is on a family, but when you believe in something, when you believe in the people of the Commonwealth, it's worth the sacrifice, and it's worth the hard work. And the Kilgore family believes in the people of this important State. I want to thank their children, Klarke and Kelsey.

I want to thank Jean Ann Bolling, Maureen McDonnell. I want to thank all the families of the candidates who are supporting the candidates. It's important to be a family unit in this kind of race, see. There's a lot of pressure. There's a lot of noise, and there's nothing better to go home to a loving family. And that's why this guy is going to be a good Governor. See, when times get hot, he's going to be able to rely on some basics in life, and that is his faith and his family to see him through.

I appreciate Congressman Eric Cantor and his wife, Diana. Thank you all for coming. I thank all the State and local officials who are here. I want to thank our political officials. I want to thank all the grassroots activists, all the people who put up the signs—all the people, all the people who have been making the phone calls. We thank you both—both of us thank you for going door to door and knocking on your neighbor's door. Keep working hard. And when you do, you'll be rewarded with a great victory tomorrow night with Jerry Kilgore as your Governor.

The thing I like about this fellow is he grew up in Virginia, and he grew up on a small farm. That means he's a down-to-earth person. He doesn't have a lot of

fancy airs. That's the kind of guy you want to represent you, a person who understands how the common man thinks, a person who shares the values with the majority of people in the Commonwealth of Virginia.

He's on the right side of the issues too. See, it's one thing to have good character; it's a different thing to have somebody who is on the right side of the issues. See, he understands that when he is the Governor, the top priority of this State is to make sure you educate every single child, that you cannot leave any child behind if you're going to have a State that's got a hopeful future.

I appreciate his plan to retain, recruit, and reward good teachers. You can't—by the way, if there's any teachers out there, both Jerry and I thank you for teaching. You'll have a good friend in the Governor's mansion, somebody who understands the value and importance of being a teacher. And the parents will have somebody in the Governor's mansion who understands the value and importance of teaching every child to read and write and add and subtract.

I appreciate Jerry's stand on taxes. He trusts the people with their own money. See, that's a philosophical difference. Think about the campaign. If you're out there listening, think about which candidate says, "I trust you with your own money." See, he understands the difference between your money and what others call the government's money. It's not the government's money; it's the people's money. It's the hard-working people's money.

It's just not rhetoric; this man's got a record. He opposed the State tax increase last year. He's going to eliminate the State death tax once and for all. He's going to eliminate the State car tax once and for all. If you want to keep your taxes low and keep your economy growing, there's only one candidate in this race who will do so, and that's Jerry Kilgore.

Audience members. Jerry! Jerry! Jerry!

The President. One of the key jobs of a Governor is to keep the people of the State safe. One of the key responsibilities is to support the law enforcement officials in your State, and he'll do that. He'll stand with the men and women who wear the uniform, who patrol your highway, who work in the neighborhood to keep the people of this Commonwealth safe. He's going to be tough on crime, and he's going to enforce all the laws—all the laws of the Commonwealth of Virginia.

He's got a good roads plan. I, frankly, haven't had that much problem driving on the roads around here—[*Laughter*]—but a lot of you have. These roads are crowded, and he's going to do something about it. He's got a plan, as he says, to get Virginia moving again. It's not only moving again when it comes to roads; it's moving forward to make sure there's a hopeful life for every single citizen in this Commonwealth.

Virginia is the home to a lot of military folks. Jerry Kilgore understands we're at war with an enemy that hates what we stand for. He'll be supportive of the families who live in this State whose loved ones are sacrificing on behalf of the American people. He'll be—he understands the nature of this struggle. He understands that our government must never let down our guard, that we have a solemn obligation to protect the American people, that we must never wait to be attacked again, that we must stay on the offense and bring people to justice before they harm the American people.

He also shares the same faith I have in the capacity of freedom to yield the peace we all want. He understands what I understand, and that is democracy is the best hope of mankind, that in the deep—in everybody's soul, regardless of their religion or where they live, is the deep desire to live in freedom. You see, freedom—freedom is not America's gift to the world; freedom is the Almighty God's gift to each man and woman in this world. And by staying strong and confident in the capacity

of freedom to transform societies, he understands we're laying the foundation of peace for generations to come.

Jerry Kilgore is a man who brings deep principles and values into this race and will bring those same values into the Governor's mansion. He has a respect for life and will work hard to build a culture of life here in Virginia. He stands on that solid ground of deep moral conviction and solid Virginia principles. And that is why I'm absolutely confident he is up for the task and will make a great Governor for the Commonwealth of Virginia.

Laura and I are so grateful for this—for the welcome. Thank you all so much for coming out. I don't want to keep you too long. [*Applause*] No, no, no. You've got a job to do. See, if I could vote, you already got my vote. You need to go out and find that undecided person. You need to find our fellow Republicans and those discerning Democrats who know a good man when they see one. Keep working hard. Turn out that vote, and you'll be proud of the next Governor of Virginia, Jerry Kilgore.

NOTE: The President spoke at 7:47 p.m. at the Dominion Energy, Inc., hangar at Richmond International Airport. In his remarks, he referred to Marty Kilgore, wife of Jerry Kilgore, candidate for Virginia Governor; Jean Ann Bolling, wife of Bill Bolling, candidate for Virginia Lieutenant Governor; and Maureen McDonnell, wife of Bob McDonnell, candidate for Virginia attorney general.

Interview With Foreign Print Journalists
November 8, 2005

The President. First I'm going to make just kind of some general remarks, and then will be glad to answer some questions for a while.

First, I'm really looking forward to my trip. I'll be having meetings with the leaders of Japan, China, South Korea, and Mongolia, and then, of course, will attend the APEC meeting as well as meeting with ASEAN countries. So this is a chance for me to continue to talk about the war on terror, the need for all of us to work to spread freedom.

I go representing the people of this country, obviously. I go to represent the workers, as I remind our partners in the Far East that trade must be not only free but fair. I go to represent the business people, in reminding people that there must be a strong focus on intellectual property rights throughout the world. I go to represent people who believe that we ought to be working together, like I believe, at the WTO, the Doha round, to advance the round, to see if we can't—I spent time doing that my recent trip in Latin America; I will continue that message of working toward a successful Doha round.

And so this will be a good opportunity to explain to our partners that a successful round in Doha will be good for our respective countries, our workers, our farmers, our business people. But it will also help us work together to alleviate poverty. So I've been really looking forward to the trip.

One other aspect of the trip that is important to me, and I know—we'll continue our dialog on avian flu, a potential pandemic, and how we can work together to detect and keep the folks informed about the possible outbreak of avian flu, how to isolate the flu—the virus, if it's detected, and what we can do together. This will be an important way to continue to advance this issue. I've spoken to the President of

China about this issue, for example, and I'm going to bring it up again.

We've got a lot of issues on the table, and so this is an—this will be a chance to continue to advance those issues. Relations are strong in the Far East. U.S. relations with Japan and South Korea and China and Mongolia are excellent. We don't always agree on every issue, but they are very strong. And this is a chance to continue to advance those relationships.

And so with that, we'll start with you, Mr. Nishimura.

Japan-U.S. Relations

Yoichi Nishimura. Thank you, sir, Mr. President. The United States and Japan recently signed a document on the transformation of U.S.-Japan alliance, and the realignment of U.S. and Japanese forces in Japan. But there is a strong local opposition to some of these plans. For example, the local government in Okinawa has called this relocation of Futenma Marine Air Corps—Air Station unacceptable. Since these plans for relocation have implication for a broader transformation plan of your country, how will you overcome this local, strong opposition to the implementation of the agreement, and more generally, what would you like to achieve in the Asia-Pacific region through the strengthening of the U.S.-Japan alliance?

The President. The fact that we reached an agreement on troop realignment shows the maturity of our relationship. As you know, the agreement that has been reached was done so in good faith between the U.S. Government and the Japanese Government. It's an agreement that was not easy to bring to conclusion, but yet, nevertheless, because our relationship is strong and vital, we're able to do so.

In a democracy, it's hard—first of all, it's hard to satisfy all the people all the time. And so—I'm aware that there is a discontent with the agreement expressed by the folks—some of the folks on Okinawa toward the Government—the Japanese Government that negotiated the deal. My attitude is and my message to the good people in Okinawa is: This is a good-faith effort. We tried to reach an accord that accommodated a lot of interests. And it's a positive development.

Secondly, the relationship—it shows the—how strong we are, as an alliance, as a friendship. This has been a difficult issue, and in that it got resolved, it should be a sign to people on both sides of this issue that there is a cordial, frank, relationship that was able to deal with this sensitive subject.

U.S.-Japan relations are important for our respective countries. We're trading partners; we're partners in peace. And I want to congratulate and thank the people of Japan for helping the people of Iraq establish a democracy. We worked in strong collaboration on a variety of issues, whether it be helping Afghanistan or whether it be to tackle disease around the world.

So this is a healthy relationship, and it's good for peace, and it's good for prosperity of our peoples.

Mr. Heo.

South Korea-U.S. Relations

Yongbom Heo. Yes, Mr. President. I'd like to also ask about the relationship between United States and South Korea. Do you have any specific plans for the strengthening of the alliance, and to improve the relationship between the United States and South Korea? In that context, what do you also think of the growing anti-American sentiments in South Korea?

The President. Well, first of all, the trip will help strengthen the alliance. Any time I can sit down with a leader and discuss common opportunities and common problems, that strengthens the relationship. Secondly, we have shown the people in South Korea that we're able to, again, deal with the complex issue of military bases in a way that is thoughtful and sensitive.

As you know, we're realigning our forces and realigning our bases. The Government

is a duly elected Government of the people. It tends to reflect the will—they reflect the will of the people and this relationship, and the realigning of the forces reflects the will of the people. And it's being done in a respectful way. That should strengthen the relationship.

As well, I want to congratulate the Government and thank the Government of South Korea for the support in democracy in Iraq. People there—the Government there has helped the people in Iraq see a way forward by providing security forces there. I appreciate that very much.

Ours is a very important relationship, and it is one that—one that is able to accomplish important things, such as working together to make sure that we have fair trade. And I'll bring that up, of course, with the President. We don't have a free trade agreement yet with South Korea, but nevertheless, we've got a lot of trade with South Korea, and we want it to be mutually beneficial. And the more beneficial trade is between our countries, the deeper our ties become.

I don't study public opinion polls in South Korea, so I don't know the basis for the last part of your question. But I mean, I made some difficult decisions, and I understand not everybody agrees with them. But one of the things I hope people do agree with in South Korea is that the United States—they've got a strong friend in the United States. We've been a friend for a long period of time, and we'll remain a friend.

Mr. Wang.

China-U.S. Relations

Faen Wang. Thank you, Mr. President. You are going to visit China for a third time since 2001. As we know, the relationship between two countries have made considerable headway since you took office. Now it's your second term in office. How do you assess the relations between China and the United States at this moment? And how do you anticipate relations in the coming years?

The President. I would say my personal relationship with President Hu is very good. I would say relations between the United States is mixed—or between China and the United States is mixed. On the one hand, we have got increasing trade and dialog and cooperation. On the other hand, there is still work to be done on intellectual property rights, for example, or currency or market access.

And so ours is a complex and important relationship. And I look forward to visiting once again with the President and talking to him about these very vital issues. I was very pleased the last time we met in New York that he openly stated that we need—that China will work hard on having intellectual property rights. And this is not just an issue between the United States and China. It's really an issue that when China cracks down and enforces intellectual property rights laws, that it will be good for China's standing in the world. People really don't want to do business in a country if they think their products is going to be—if the patents will be copied.

And so I appreciate the President's strong statement on intellectual property rights, and it will be a chance to continue to talk about intellectual property rights.

I appreciate the Government's position on currency as they begin—the beginnings of a market-based currency. And that was a strong step forward. I will remind him that this Government believes they should continue to advance toward market-based evaluation of their currency, for the sake of the world, not just for the sake of bilateral relations.

There's a—I want to tell him that there's a—that we—again, what we've discussed in the past, that there's—the trade balance between China and the United States is bothersome to people here and that we've got to address the trade balance. And one way to do so is for there to be market access

for U.S. products, continued market access for U.S. products.

So we've got an important relationship, and it's a good relationship. But it's one in which I will continue to bring the—our concerns to the Chinese Government.

Another round.

China-Japan-Korea Relations

Mr. Nishimura. Okay, Mr. President, thank you. It seems the relationship between Japan and China is currently at an all-time low. We have heard criticism, concern voiced by China about Prime Minister Koizumi's recent visit to Yasukuni Shrine. This is, Mr. President, historically, a sensitive issue between the two countries. As poor relations between Japan and China have a significant impact on U.S. national interests in Asia, I suppose, what can the United States do to address the worsening relationship between the two countries—I mean, Japan and China—and how would you like to rebuild U.S., Japan, and China relations as a part of your comprehensive diplomacy towards Asia?

The President. What I can do is to urge the leaders of not only China and Japan to dialog and to try to get the past behind them as we move forward but also to do the same with the South Korean leader. I think the issue that you described goes beyond just Japanese-Chinese relationships; it's probably Japanese-South Korean relationships as well. And my point to not only the Prime Minister of Japan but to the respective Presidents is that, look, I understand that there is great tension as a result of some events that took place in the past. But the United States and China—I mean, the United States and Japan at one time were sworn enemies. And now here we are sitting down as friends. In other words, it's possible to forget the past. It's difficult, but it is possible.

So I think a useful role for me will be to paint a—talk about the future and talk about how optimistic the future can be, particularly as nations are able to work out past differences and focus on what's—and focus on the future. No question that there's tension. On the other hand, if you look at capital flows between Japan and China, there is a significant amount of investment taking place, which indicates to me that there is a possibility for the relations to improve over time. In other words, not all aspects of the relationship is negative.

Mr. Heo.

North Korea

Mr. Heo. Thank you, Mr. President.

The President. You probably were going to ask the same question, weren't you? [*Laughter*]

Mr. Heo. I would like to ask about North Korean issue.

The President. That's fine, but I thought you were going to ask about the shrine.

Mr. Heo. Mr. President, you have called Mr. Kim Chong-il, North Korean leader—Kim Chong-il's regime a "tyranny" and North Korea an "axis of evil." What can you do to promote human rights and democracy in North Korea? And what kind of leadership do you expect from Kim Chong-il to exercise as the leader of North Korea?

The President. I have been—I have expressed my concerns about the treatment of men, women, and children in North Korea. I worry about a society that is going hungry. I worry about forced labor camps. And I do so—and as I do worry about that, I do so because I am, like many Americans, a compassionate—share a compassion for all peoples, regardless of where they live.

I believe a—the measure, the mark of a good leader is one that cares first and foremost about the human condition of the people that live in the country. And where there's starvation and hunger, the leader's responsibility is to address that and, if need be, call upon others to make sure that food and aid actually get into the mouths of the hungry. I believe that a humane society

is one in which people have a voice in government. And so I have talked about these values. But I've also talked about them in the context of say, Myanmar. I have warned about the undermining of those values in other parts of the world. It's a consistent message of my administration.

As you know, the main focus of the region is to adhere to the Crawford Declaration that President Jiang Zemin and I stated in Crawford, which was that there would be a nuclear-free Korean Peninsula. And now we're working to achieve that goal—working together—Japan, China, South Korea, Russia, and the United States sitting down at the table with the North Koreans as a group, saying, "Here's our goal: For the sake of peace for all peoples, peoples of South Korea, people of North Korea, people in the region, let us achieve the goal of a nuclear-free Korean Peninsula—nuclear-weapons-free Korean Peninsula."

And so we'll be discussing this issue, of course. I'll be discussing it with the respective leaders about how to achieve that goal. We've made some progress where we declared that it's our intention to work with the North Koreans to see to it that they dismantle their nuclear weapons programs in a verifiable fashion. And so the dialog will continue on as to how to achieve this noble goal.

Yes, sir.

Taiwan

Mr. Wang. My second question is about Taiwan. The Chinese people are determined about peaceful reunification with the motherland, but the secessionist force in Taiwan have never stopped their activities, causing a threat to peace and stability Cross Strait. What do you think the United States can do in preventing the secessionist forces in Taiwan from moving toward independence, while maintaining peace and stability in the region?

The President. Well, one thing the United States can do is be consistent in its policy in dealing with the—both China and Taiwan. And so our policy has been consistent from day one, which is one China, three communiques, that we do not support independence, and that, however, we strongly support the Taiwan Relations Act. And it's important for parties to understand that's the position—that is the consistent position of this Government, that we also believe and are heartened when we see dialog beginning to take place between China and Taiwan. That's a positive development, and I will continue to encourage that dialog.

Mr. Nishimura.

Six-Party Talks

Mr. Nishimura. Yes, Mr. President.

The President. One more round of questions.

Mr. Nishimura. Thank you very much, sir.

The President. Then you probably have to go back to work.

Mr. Nishimura. Okay.

The President. So do I.

Mr. Nishimura. Let's move to the six-party talks again.

The President. Yes.

Mr. Nishimura. A little bit more in detail.

The President. Okay.

Mr. Nishimura. Actually, the next round of six-party talks beginning tomorrow in Beijing, so this is previous—the six-party talks. And now as of today, of course, the United States and Japan have demanded that North Korea take tangible steps to dismantle its nuclear weapons program. But North Korea, on the other hand, every day—almost every day—is insisting that the United States company provide it with light water reactors. So, Mr. President, there is obviously still a sizeable gap between North Korea's position and that of other five parties——

The President. Yes.

Mr. Nishimura. ——including Japan and the United States. So, Mr. President, what

would you like to see achieved during the next round, and what do you think are the most important steps in attaining those goals?

The President. Yes, thank you. Well, first of all, you're right, there's a meeting starting, I guess, this week, but it's a 3-day meeting which is really to prepare for the longer meetings, which will take place next month.

Secondly, you've assessed our position. It's not the United States' position, but our position—the five parties that are working with North Korea to achieve the goal of having a nuclear-weapons-free peninsula, and that is that—and that is that we want to see tangible results in the dismantling of a program, and at the appropriate time we'll discuss the light water reactor. That's how we interpret the agreement.

So part of the reason to go on a trip like this is to remind people about the strategy and talk it out with leaders and friends and remind them that we will stick together and hopefully achieve this noble goal. Again, it's a goal vital to all the interests of the people in the region. And it's one that I believe we can achieve by working together. And this is the—there is a certain degree of patience required when it comes to negotiating a difficult issue. And there is clearly a need for us to continue to dialog amongst ourselves, to make sure that we send a consistent message in order to achieve this goal. It's in people's interest.

It's definitely in the interest of the people in the region that there not be a nuclear weapon anywhere on the Peninsula. It's definitely in Japan's interest; I strongly believe it's in China's interest. I know it's in Russia's, and for that matter, it's in the U.S. interest. Even though we're seemingly removed, it's in our national security interest that we achieve this objective. So this is a very important subject, and I look forward to continuing to dialog with our partners in peace.

Future U.S. Role in South Korea

Mr. Heo. Thank you, Mr. President.

The President. Make this a good one, because it's your last question. [*Laughter*]

Mr. Heo. What kind of new role do you expect United States troops in Northeast Asia, including South Korea, to do in the future? And what are you going to deal with their critical issues, such as strategic flexibility of the United States forces in Korea and the transporting wartime operational control from the United States forces to Korea?

The President. The first part of your question, the role of U.S. troops is to provide stability. Obviously, there is—on the Korean Peninsula, North Korea has got troops massed on the DMZ. Part of the role and the relationship with the South Korean troops is to provide stability to the people in the Korean Peninsula.

Now, as you know, we're repositioning our troops and realigning bases, but we have done so in a way, as we've worked out with President Roh in such a way as not to diminish the capacity to provide stability. And secondly, the presence of troops helps provide regional stability.

The arrangement we have on the Korean Peninsula has worked for a long period of time. And that ought to be the operative model as we go forward.

China-U.S. Relations

Mr. Wang. China and the United States have enjoyed good cooperation in various areas, including fighting terrorism, democratic relation, and the nuclear issues of Korean Peninsula. And a shared interest between the two countries have increased over time. So what's your comment in this regard, and where do you think we could expand our cooperation further, say, in what areas?

The President. Well, first of all, we do have good cooperation. We trade a lot—that's cooperation. On the other hand, we just want to make sure—and both sides

feel that it's important to have a level playing field when it comes to trade. Advancing the Doha round is an area where we can cooperate together.

The avian flu area is an area where we can cooperate together. And I did have a very good discussion with President Hu about this in New York. And I'll bring it up again, because I am concerned about a pandemic. And I'm not suggesting it's going to break out in any country; but if it were to break out anywhere in the world, it becomes an international issue. In other words, I'm not saying just because I'm talking to President Hu that I think it's going to happen in China. All I'm saying is that if it happens anywhere, China and the United States, Japan and South Korea, ASEAN countries, APEC countries, everyone is going to have to work together to identify, contain and respond to an outbreak. So this is an important area.

We work together in the war on terror. There is a variety of ways that we can continue to advance an agenda that is based upon peace. And then, again, this is a complex relationship, as I said. And it's an area, for example, where I will continue to remind President Hu about, for example, my personal faith and the belief that people should be allowed to worship freely. And a vibrant, whole society is one that recognizes that certain freedoms are inherent and need to be part of a complete society. And he's made some very positive statements and interesting statements about different aspects of freedom.

So this is a vital relationship. China is a vast, significant, growing economy that is—using more and more energy. And here is an area where all of us can work together, and that is on how to share technologies and use technologies in such a way that we become less dependent on hydrocarbons. Certainly, Japan has an interest in this in that she imports a lot of hydrocarbons. South Korean Peninsula, same thing—or South Korea, same thing—and China. The United States uses a lot of hydrocarbons, and it's in our interest that we develop technologies so that we use less. It's in China's interest as well. So energy cooperation, the idea of discussing how to best move forward and to share technologies makes a lot of sense for our respective people and the world for that matter.

And so it's a—we've got great opportunities to work together. I'm really looking forward to going to the three countries represented here. Every time I go out to the Far East, I come back appreciative of the notion of hard work and entrepreneurship and culture. So I'm looking forward to the trip. It's going to be—it'll be an important trip.

Thank you all for your time. Very good questions, appreciate it. Thank you all.

NOTE: The interview was taped at 10:30 a.m. in the Roosevelt Room at the White House for later broadcast. In his remarks, the President referred to Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi of Japan; President Hu Jintao and former President Jiang Zemin of China; President Roh Moo-hyun of South Korea; President Nambaryn Enkhbayar of Mongolia; and Chairman Kim Chong-il of North Korea. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this interview.

Interview With Japan's NHK Television
November 8, 2005

Japan-U.S. Relations

Yoshio Nishikawa. Thank you very much. My question is on U.S.-Japan alliance coming up to your meeting with Prime Minister Koizumi next week. How would you define its significance?

The President. First, I would define the relationship as a close relationship. I think people who follow my statements here in America about foreign policy know that I admire Prime Minister Koizumi a lot and consider him a close friend. And that's an important part of having good relations.

Secondly, the relationship between Japan and the United States is an important relationship. It is important for peace, and it's important for prosperity. We're significant trading partners, and the more we trade together in a fair way, the more it's likely that there will be prosperity. And we're working together to maintain the peace. And I appreciate very much the Japanese commitment to democracy and freedom around the world.

Japan's Role in Iraq

Mr. Nishikawa. Especially the deployment of the Japanese Self-Defense Force in Iraq is, I think, a symbol of U.S.-Japan relationship. And will you be urging Prime Minister Koizumi to prolong its deployment period as the mandate expires next month?

The President. Well, I'm aware the mandate does expire. First, I do want to thank the Government and the people of Japan for supporting the democratic aspirations of the people of Iraq. That's noble, and it's important for spreading peace, because democracies don't fight. After all, look at the relationship between the United States and Japan: We're democracies, and we coexist peacefully, and we work together to keep the peace.

Secondly, I will—I think what's important is that we get past these elections in Iraq, and then coalition allies can discuss with a new Iraqi Government how to proceed forward. I have always said that as the Iraqis stand up—in other words, as the Iraqis get more trained to secure the peace, then coalition forces and the U.S. forces will stand down.

Security and Defense Cooperation

Mr. Nishikawa. So would we allow to return to the alliance again, and in the recent two-plus-two meeting, there was important agreement for increasing cooperation on security and on defense front, such as the showing of base facilities. But within Japan there is a concern that Japan might be engulfed by the international—the United States' international strategy, and how would you respond to this concern?

The President. Well, first of all, Japan makes the decisions that the government thinks is necessary. Japan is, of course, a sovereign nation. And we work closely to work out our defense posture in concert with what's in the best interests of not only America but with Japan.

Secondly, as you know, we've worked very closely on an arrangement to realign troops on Okinawa. That's what allies and friends do; they work through difficult problems in a way that satisfies the needs of both parties as well as what is good for regional stability, and that we would always consult with our friends, the Japanese. We would never put them in a position that ran contrary to their national interests.

China-Japan Relations

Mr. Nishikawa. Then I'd like to move on. Regional issues?

The President. Sure.

Mr. Nishikawa. First, China, which is growing dramatically——

The President. Yes. [*Laughter*]

Mr. Nishikawa. ——in economics and military power. I see in many aspects Japan and the United States is cooperating. But Japanese relationship with China is aggravating because of Prime Minister's visit to Yasukuni Shrine. How—what do you—how do you view this visit?

The President. Well, first of all, I think the relationship between China and Japan is more complicated than just a visit to a shrine. In other words, there's a lot of Japanese capital investing in China, which is one indication of the relationship, and of course, there's the political side, which I understand is strained right now.

And so it seems like a proper role for me is to remind our friends in the region that it takes work to overcome the past. But overcoming the past is going to be necessary to have a bright future. I remind people that the United States and Japan were sworn enemies at one time. And we worked—we've worked to overcome that, and now we're close allies. And the same is possible with other countries in the region, between Japan and those affected by World War II.

Mr. Nishikawa. And do you intend to address what you told me in your meeting with the Prime Minister?

The President. Well, if he wants to talk about it, I'd be glad to talk about it. But what's interesting about this interview is I just addressed the issue, so he probably will hear this. But the Prime Minister is a savvy man, and he is a smart man. And he knows very well that it requires work to get past old grievances. And he's—I think—I find him to be a very skilled diplomat as well.

North Korea

Mr. Nishikawa. And with regards to North Korea, Japan is continuously working for a long-desired solution to Japanese abductees.

The President. Yes.

Mr. Nishikawa. And so how does the United States aim to support Japan on this issue?

The President. Well, of course, we abhor abductions. And we can understand the heartbreak of the Japanese families that—who lost a loved one, and therefore support Japan in its desire to resolve this issue. However, the main focus of our discussions—our six-party talks is to make sure that the Korean Peninsula does not have a nuclear weapon. And that's in Japan's interest as well as in the interest of the United States and, for that matter, everybody else in the region, that we succeed in these talks to get—make sure that the North Koreans hear with one voice, a voice spoken by China, South Korea, Japan, the United States, and Russia, that it is in the interest of world peace and harmony that all—that North Korea and South Korea, for that matter, does not have a nuclear weapon.

Beef Exports to Japan

Mr. Nishikawa. Lastly, it has been 2 years since Japan has banned imports of beef.

The President. Yes. [*Laughter*]

Mr. Nishikawa. What do you expect?

The President. Well, I understand this is a very—that the—this is a difficult issue. I'm also pleased to see that the Food Safety Commission—I think that's what it's called——

Mr. Nishikawa. Yes.

The President. ——has ruled that U.S. beef is safe. Of course, our cattlemen here believe the beef is safe. I'm more than willing to eat U.S. beef, and do—eat a lot of it. And my point is, is that I hope that the government follows through with the recommendations of the safety commission—or just decides about opening the market and listens to the safety commission, because we feel like not only our beef is safe, but it's an important part of our cattle industry to be able to sell to the Japanese consumer.

Mr. Nishikawa. So I thank you again, Mr. President——

The President. Thank you, sir.

Mr. Nishikawa. ——for giving us such a kind opportunity to interview you.

The President. Well, thank you very much.

NOTE: The interview was taped at 1:18 p.m. in the Map Room at the White House for later broadcast. In his remarks, the President referred to Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi of Japan. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this interview.

Interview With the Korean Broadcasting System
November 8, 2005

Six-Party Talks

Kwang Chool Lee. Mr. President, thank you for granting this interview with KBS, Korean Broadcasting System. Mr. President, today a new round in the six-party talks starts in Beijing. Do you have any deadline for progress in the talks and for North Korea to dismantle its nuclear program?

The President. I guess I would define my feelings this way: I think the world is watching very carefully whether or not we—that's six countries—are able to achieve a noble and peaceful objective, which is a Korean Peninsula which does not have any nuclear weapons.

And thus far, there has been some progress, but it's been mainly talk. And my hope, of course, is that we begin to see action, results. And those results, of course, would be that there would be a verifiable dismantling of nuclear weapons and the programs required to make nuclear weapons. We will continue to work with the parties to move the process beyond rhetoric to reality.

Yasukuni Shrine

Mr. Lee. But recently the relations amongst China, Japan, and Korea are antagonized by Mr. Koizumi's visit to Yasukuni Shrine, which honors World War II criminals. Mr. President, don't you think this is an unnecessary provocation to other Asian countries tortured by these war criminals?

The President. I am aware of the friction caused by the Prime Minister of Japan's decision. I believe a useful role for me, as someone who is friendly with the three leaders involved, is to remind people that it is best to put the past behind and move forward in the future. And I understand the sentiments of the South Korean people; they're still angry about the past. And so there's a natural reaction, when they view a decision made by the Prime Minister.

I'm hopeful that people will be able to see what happened between U.S. and Japanese relations. We're close, like we're close with South Korea, and yet my dad, for example, was a fighter—a Navy fighter against the Japanese. In other words, with hard work, we can get the past behind us, and that would be my hope when I discuss this issue with the respective leaders.

South Korea-U.S. Relations

Mr. Lee. Mr. President, recently many Koreans and Americans have become anxious about the relations between our two countries. What are your expectations of Korea in this changing relations, and what does U.S. offer to Korea in this changed environment?

The President. Well, I appreciate that question. Look, I think that relations are better than some people want to say they are. As a matter of fact, I know relations

between our governments is good. We've done some—we've made some difficult decisions together and have acted together. For example, troops in Iraq—that was difficult. That was a difficult decision for your President. It was a difficult decision for me, as a matter of fact, to commit troops. And yet, we're working together to bring democracy, and therefore peace, to a troubled part of the world.

We had a base realignment issue that we worked out with the South Korean Government. That's not an easy issue, but it's a necessary issue that the Government—South Korean Government thought was necessary and I agreed was necessary. And we did so in a cordial way.

We've got a lot of trade. I mean, the trade between South Korea and the United States is substantial. There is an opportunity down the road for us to put a free trade agreement in. Both countries are going to have to work hard to make that happen. There's a lot of exchange of people back and forth between our countries.

So there's a lot of contact, a lot of commerce, and a lot of security measures we're taking together. I think the thing to do is to keep advancing the relationship and working to make it more mature so that we can work together to keep the peace.

Mr. Lee. Mr. President, you mentioned free trade. And on your recent trip to South America, you stressed the importance of free trade. Will the FTA be on the main agenda when you visit Korea?

The President. Oh, I think—I'm not sure what you mean by "main agenda," but it's certainly going to be an item we discuss. And you know, these agreements are important, but so is a more global agreement, called the Doha round of the WTO. And of course, I'll be discussing that as well, not only with President Roh but at the APEC meeting that South Korea is so kindly hosting.

Mr. Lee. Thank you, Mr. President, for sharing your views.

The President. Well, thank you very much. I'm looking forward to going back to your beautiful country. And I want to thank the Government of South Korea and the people of South Korea for hosting me and Laura as we return.

Mr. Lee. Thank you, sir.

The President. Yes, sir.

NOTE: The interview was taped at 1:27 p.m. in the Map Room at the White House for later broadcast. In his remarks, the President referred to Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi of Japan; and President Roh Moo-hyun of South Korea. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this interview.

Interview With Phoenix Television of Hong Kong
November 8, 2005

China-U.S. Relations

Naichain Mo. Mr. President, thank you for selecting Phoenix Television for this interview. What greeting and message would you like to convey to the Chinese people prior to your visit to China?

The President. First, that the relationship between China and America is an important relationship. It's a mixed relationship. There is a lot of good that we're doing together, and there's a lot of areas where we may not have full agreement but, nevertheless, are able to discuss our disagreements in a very cordial way. And so I would tell the people of China you live in a great, massive country that's growing well and that we want to have good relations with you.

President's Upcoming Visit to China

Ms. Mo. This will be your third formal visit to China.

The President. Yes.

Ms. Mo. What do you hope to achieve with this visit?

The President. Well, first of all, the visit is giving me a chance to further get to know the leadership. President Hu is a person who I enjoy visiting with. He is a smart fellow. And the more you get to know a person, the better—the easier it is to make good policy.

Secondly, I'm going to, of course, be going to China to represent the interests of my people. I'll talk about the need for trade that is free and fair. I'll talk about the currency, of course. I'll talk about intellectual property rights that the President and I have discussed before.

And then on the international front we'll, of course—I'll confirm my "one China," three-communique policy, that not only says that we do not support independence but as well, we will adhere to the Taiwan Relations Act. I think that's important for the Chinese leadership and the people of China to hear.

We've also got an agenda to fight terrorism, fight narcotrafficking, as well as to work together to convince the leader of North Korea that the Korean Peninsula should be nuclear weapons-free.

So we've got a broad agenda.

Ms. Mo. Keep you busy.

The President. It will keep us busy, but it's an important agenda, and the people of China must understand that when the United States and China works together, we can accomplish a lot.

Taiwan

Ms. Mo. You brought up Taiwan. I remember in 2001 and 2003 you made strong statements regarding Taiwan——

The President. Yes.

Ms. Mo. ——and regarding the recent development, do you feel less concern about a cross-strait situation than you were in, like, 2003?

The President. Well, I'm always concerned that one party or the other will do something unilaterally to change the status quo, which would then create, you know, a source of angst and anger. And therefore, I'm constantly reiterating my position so that both sides clearly know the position of the United States.

Ms. Mo. Are you optimistic about a peaceful resolution in the end?

The President. I have seen some—yes, I am optimistic there will be a peaceful resolution. Secondly, I am optimistic because I have seen cross-straits discussion starting to take place. And I urge the parties to continue those discussions. I believe it is possible, through discussion and good will, to end up solving this issue in a peaceful way.

China-U.S. Relations

Ms. Mo. You call U.S.-China relationship complicated.

The President. Yes.

Ms. Mo. And we heard U.S. officials and experts have variously called China a threat, a partner, a competitor, and an opportunity. So how do you see China, and what's your plan to deal with China's emergence?

The President. Well, that's interesting—all the different adjectives I guess kind of express a complicated relationship. I would say—I think we've got a lot of issues to deal with, is the best way to describe it. And on issues on which we agree, we can make positive contributions and change.

Issues we don't necessarily agree on, we can work through and do so in a frank way. And I repeat, I think we have a fantastic opportunity by working with China and other countries to make sure that the Korean Peninsula is nuclear weapons-free, which will lay a foundation for a peace in the region and the hemisphere, and that's important.

Ms. Mo. You brought up North Korea. What other issues do you most seek China's

support and cooperation? And what do you expect them to do?

The President. Well, first of all, on the United Nations Security Council we work on every issue together. And one way for us to be able to work together is just to share opinions on different issues. For example, I'll bring up Iran. I want the President to understand how I think it's important for the free world and the peaceful world to work together to convince the Iranians not to develop a nuclear weapon.

China has got influence. China is a big, powerful nation. And therefore, it's in our interest that we share ideas and work together. I'll also want to continue discussions on the economic front, because we've got a big trade imbalance with China, but we're making progress. The Chinese took a good first step on having a market currency; I believe they ought to do more. The President made a very strong statement in New York about intellectual property rights. We've reached a textile agreement, which is a very important signal to our folks who want to make sure that the President works for fair trade. And with the trade balance as big as it is, you know, it's important for people here in America to be able to say to themselves, "We hope it's fair." And I'm going to continue to insist on fair trade as well.

Finally, there is a couple of other areas we can work on, if you've got a second. One is energy. We consume a lot of energy. China is consuming more energy. And we need to share information and share technologies so both of us can diversify away from hydrocarbons.

President's 1975 Visit to China

Ms. Mo. My last question, in 1975 you visited China, when your father was U.S. Representative in Beijing.

The President. Yes, I did.

Ms. Mo. I know you spent your 29th birthday there——

The President. That's right. [*Laughter*]

Ms. Mo. ——and went back a number of visit over the years. Can you share with us some of the memories that made the deepest impression on you when you think of China?

The President. I think of how different China is today than it was in 1975. In 1975—first of all, I had a fantastic experience when I went there in 1975.

Ms. Mo. Good to know.

The President. I really did. It was great. It was really interesting. The two impressions—a couple of impressions. One, everybody was on bicycles; there weren't many automobiles. I happened to be one of the people on bicycles. I rode all over the place in Beijing, which was fascinating.

Secondly, I can remember how odd people thought I looked. In other words, there wasn't much exposure to the West, and all of a sudden an American starts riding a bike amongst them, and it, frankly, surprised some people.

And thirdly, I noticed there was uniformity in dress. People wore the same style clothes. And that's changed, which means there's a market; people are beginning to express their own individual desires and somebody is meeting those desires with a product. There's high-rise buildings that are magnificent. When I went to Shanghai right after September the 11th, 2001, I was—it was mind-boggling to look at the fantastic buildings that had been built between the airport and the old town.

So this is a country that has progressed a lot since 1975, which shows the vast potential of China. And it explains to people—it should explain to people in America why it's important for our Government to have a good working relationship—as complex as it is, but to have a good working relationship. And we do. And that's in the interest not only of our respective people but it's in the interest of the world.

Ms. Mo. Thank you, Mr. President.

The President. Thanks for coming.

Ms. Mo. I wish you a very good trip to Asia and a successful visit to China.

The President. Thank you very much.

NOTE: The interview was taped at 1:34 p.m. in the Map Room at the White House for later broadcast. In his remarks, the President referred to President Hu Jintao of China; and Chairman Kim Chong-il of North Korea. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this interview.

Interview With Eagle Television of Mongolia
November 8, 2005

President's Upcoming Visit to Mongolia

Gonchigjav Batjav. So there are many developing countries in Asia. So why did you choose to visit Mongolia at this time?

The President. First of all, I am really looking forward to going. This is going to be an exciting trip for me and Laura. Mongolia has got a certain fascination for me. I grew up in the West of the United States where there's—where we like wide-open spaces. And when you think about Mongolia, you think about a big country with a lot of space. But what's interesting about Mongolia is it's more than geography now, as far as I'm concerned. It's a people that have worked hard to become free, a democracy.

We kind of consider ourselves—and we like the slogan, "the third neighbor" of Mongolia. And so I've chosen to go there because of the spirit of the people and a leadership that shares our desire to let the—to have a government of and by and for the people.

Democratic Values

Mr. Batjav. Great. So, Mr. President, let's talk for a moment about America's foreign policy.

The President. Okay.

Mr. Batjav. Democracies change leaders every few years, so in that change often comes a change in a nation's foreign policy. So what steps has your administration taken to ensure that the foreign policy initiatives you have taken will continue to be guiding principles for the U.S. after you leave the White House?

The President. Thank you. That's a very interesting question. First of all, there are certain values that are inherent in our country that any leader will bring to the White House, the value of human rights, human dignity, freedom to worship, freedom of the press, freedom to speak your mind. And so foreign policy will have inherent in it those values.

The other thing is, is that once democracy takes hold—it's hard work to make it work, but once it takes hold, it's hard to change it. Because democracy really speaks to the people and says, "We listen to you. You're free. You can realize your dreams." And so one of the things my administration is doing is working in places where there hasn't been democracy. I think of the Palestinian Territories or Iraq. We're working in places where there's a new democracy to help strengthen those democracies. Lebanon is a good example—Georgia, Ukraine. We're working with countries that have dedicated themselves to democracy but want the friendship of the United States to help them even further democracy. And Mongolia is such a case.

And so one way you leave behind a foundation that others can't undo is to give people—help people develop a form of government that just can't be unwound unless something catastrophic were to take place inside the country.

Mongolia-U.S. Relations

Mr. Batjav. Okay, great. So as part of our new relationship, Mongolia has contributed our peacekeeping troops in Iraq and Afghanistan. So in the future, if there are any military threats against Mongolia by its neighbors, would the U.S., under your administration, also rise to our defense?

The President. That's a very good question. We're close friends. And by being friends, I think we can prevent any potential military dispute from arising. But of course we would support our friends. We certainly would—nobody anticipates over the next 3 years of my administration, any force being used against our friend. But my visit should send a signal to the people of Mongolia that you've got a friend in the United States and a friend in George W. Bush.

Democracy in Mongolia

Mr. Batjav. Great to hear it. So during your visit to Mongolia, you will be addressing the nation in a wide televised address. So our nation is experiencing a crisis of corruption.

The President. Yes.

Mr. Batjav. So you will be speaking to our leaders and our nation about the dangers that corruption poses to our democracy. Can you give us a preview about it?

The President. Well, I'm not going to give you a preview of the speech, because then people may not watch it if they get a preview, see. On the other hand, I will say on your TV screens, there should be no corruption in government, that one of the foundations of any government is the ability for the people to trust the government, itself. And a foundation of democracy and a foundation of our foreign policy and a foundation of our Millennium Challenge Account is that there be honest government.

Millennium Challenge Accounts

Mr. Batjav. Okay. The next related question is going to be to Millennium Challenge.

The President. Okay.

Mr. Batjav. So how has the issue of political corruption affected Mongolia's status for the Millennium Challenge Account?

The President. Well, we intend to move forward on the Millennium Challenge Account with Mongolia. Mongolia is a friend. On the other hand, we will insist that as a condition of the Millennium Challenge checks being written that there be honest government, that there be investment in health and education of the people, that there be a dedication to rule of law and to the marketplace.

Democracy in Mongolia

Mr. Batjav. Okay, the last question is so important for our television. You might be aware that the Eagle Television was the first independent TV station established in Mongolia, with American Christians and Mongolians are working together to advance freedom of speech, press, and conscience in our country. So, first, how do you feel about the role of ordinary American citizens supporting this kind of work for Mongolia's democracy? And the second, what further role do you think the ordinary American citizens can play in helping to address faith and freedom in Mongolia through media?

The President. Very good question. First of all, I believe in a free media, and I believe that people ought to—and a media that is independent from government, like we have in America, is an important part of a society. In other words, government officials should not fear a free media; they ought to welcome a free media.

Listen, in my own media, I don't agree with everything that is said, but I strongly support their right to say it, just like I strongly support the right of people of faith to be involved with helping to spread this concept of freedom.

Secondly, I think investments will help the people of Mongolia. In other words, there's a way for people in America, businesses for example, to invest in Mongolia, because that means jobs and stability and a good future.

But no, listen, you'll find Americans are very compassionate people that love freedom, and they want to help people be free. And by the way, your form of government is democracy, but it ought to reflect your traditions and your great history. And I know it is.

Listen, I'm looking forward to going to your wonderful country. It's going to be a fantastic experience. I'm excited. I truly am excited to come.

Mr. Batjav. Great. Thank you, sir.

The President. Yes, very good job. Thank you.

NOTE: The interview was taped at 1:43 p.m. in the Map Room at the White House for later broadcast. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this interview.

Remarks on South Asia Earthquake Relief Efforts
November 9, 2005

One month ago, the nation of Pakistan suffered its worst natural disaster in a century when a massive earthquake struck northeast of the capital city of Islamabad. The human toll is staggering. This disaster has taken the lives of more than 70,000 Pakistanis. It has injured almost 70,000 more and left nearly 3 million people without their homes. In India, the earthquake killed more than a thousand people and injured over 6,000 others.

As the harsh mountain winter approaches, millions of people in these affected areas will continue to need food, water, shelter, and medical care. They will also need long-term help to get their lives and communities back on their feet. Once again, the world is called to comfort those affected by a terrible natural catastrophe. People across our country pray for the people in Southeast Asia, and people in our country are willing to help as well.

The United States is playing a leading role in the relief and recovery efforts, in cooperation with the Government of Pakistan. We've already made $156 million available for relief and reconstruction needs. We've provided food, water, blankets, tents, and medical care. We have disaster response personnel on the ground to assess needs and offer assistance.

Our military is playing a key role as well. A Navy construction battalion is helping to clear roads and solve other engineering challenges. Our helicopters have flown over a thousand missions to deliver aid to isolated areas. And they have transported thousands of people to places where they can receive medical treatment and shelter. We've also got a military hospital now operating in Pakistan. I'm grateful to the men and women in uniform for the noble work they are doing, and they represent the best of America, the generous spirit of our country. Our government's response to this tragedy is—should say to the people of the world, we care when somebody else suffers.

Last month, I announced that five distinguished American business leaders would work to encourage private and corporate contributions to help those affected by the natural disasters in Southeast Asia. Jeff Immelt, Jim Kelly, Hank McKinnell, and Sandy Weill are with us today, and I want to thank you all for being here. Anne Mulcahy of Xerox is not here, but she's a part of the team. I want to thank them very much for their willingness to serve,

and some of them will be going over to Pakistan along with Ambassador Hughes and others to assess the situation as a part of a Presidential delegation. When they come home from Pakistan, they're going to travel our country to rally our citizens to help the victims of this disaster.

I ask all of our citizens and businesses to contribute generously to this cause. The international response to this disaster has been generous, but the needs are still great. And so I also urge other governments, peoples in other lands, to do whatever they can do to help.

In recent months, we've had our own disasters to deal with. We had the destruction on the gulf coast of our country, and I want to remind our citizens that people around the world came to help us. They offered not only money and equipment, but they offered their prayers. I know that nothing can take the grief away of those whose lives have been affected. But I also hope the people who have been affected by natural disasters know that there's a lot of people that care for them; there's a lot of people who want to help.

As families across Southeast Asia begin to rebuild their lives, we offer our sustained compassion, our prayers, and our assistance. And we offer you our assurance that America will continue to be there to help.

I want to thank you all again for being here. Thank you for coming.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:49 p.m. in the Roosevelt Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Jeffrey R. Immelt, chairman and chief executive officer, General Electric Co.; James P. Kelly, former chairman and chief executive officer, United Parcel Service of America, Inc.; Henry A. "Hank" McKinnell, Jr., chairman and chief executive officer, Pfizer, Inc.; Sanford I. "Sandy" Weill, chairman, Citigroup, Inc.; and Anne M. Mulcahy, chairman and chief executive officer, Xerox Corp.

Remarks on Presenting the Presidential Medal of Freedom
November 9, 2005

The President. Welcome to the White House. Laura and I are so pleased that you could join us on this proud and happy occasion. It's a special honor for us to be in the company of these distinguished honorees. We welcome the honorees. We welcome their family members, and we welcome their friends.

The Presidential Medal of Freedom is America's highest civil award and is presented for meritorious achievement in public service, in science, the arts, education, athletics, business, and other fields of endeavor. The award was created through the Executive order by President John F. Kennedy and first presented here in the White House by President Lyndon B. Johnson. All who receive the Medal of Freedom can know that they have a special place in the life of our country and have earned the respect and affection of the American people.

Alan Greenspan, Ph.D., is one of the most admired and influential economists in our Nation's history. So you may be surprised to learn that Alan studied music at Juilliard. He began his career playing the saxophone and clarinet in a jazz orchestra. Even then, he showed his mathematical side—his fellow band members had him fill out their tax returns. [*Laughter*] He was on his way to a lifetime of achievement in the field of economics, from Wall Street to the White House to the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System.

The era of Chairman Greenspan will always be known as one of phenomenal economic growth, high productivity, and unprecedented innovation and opportunity for all our citizens. He is a believer in economic freedom, open and flexible markets, and boundless human creativity. In his 18 years as Fed Chairman, he applied those principles with consistency, with calm, and with wisdom. As he prepares to conclude his Government service, Alan Greenspan leaves behind a standard that will always define a successful Chairman, intellectual depth, analytical skill, and credibility beyond question. And he leaves the Fed with the utmost respect and thanks of his fellow citizens.

Like Chairman Greenspan, Vinton Cerf and Robert Kahn are brilliant men who found great success in their chosen field and have played an extraordinary role in the story of our time. Thirty-two years ago, Dr. Kahn, an engineer, and Dr. Cerf, a computer scientist, figured out how to transmit data between separate computer networks, and to do so quickly, effectively, and routinely. Dr. Kahn called it "internetting." By developing a common digital language for computers across networks, these two men prepared the way for a technological revolution.

The Internet is one of the greatest innovations ever launched and even now has vast potential as a force for great good. And it's source of pride to all of us—it is a source of pride to all of us that this progress was set in motion by two talented Americans. Our economy, our lives, and our world have all been enriched by the imagination and the efforts of Robert Kahn and Vinton Cerf.

Sonny Montgomery has given the United States a lifetime of service. He wore the Army uniform in World War II, earning a Bronze Star for valor in Europe, and returned to active duty to serve in the Korean war. He is a retired major general in the Mississippi National Guard and served the people of that State in public office for 40 years. In three decades as a Congressman, Sonny Montgomery was a tireless advocate for American service men and women, past and present. His forward-looking spirit helped to equip and train the finest fighting force in the world. And the Montgomery GI education bill has helped millions of veterans find opportunity in the nation they defended.

I know from my visits to Mississippi that all you have to say is Sonny Montgomery's name, and they still cheer. Folks remember him and love him, and so do our veterans. Sonny, you're a great man. Congratulations to you.

Air Force General Richard B. Myers became Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff less than 1 month after the attacks of September the 11th, 2001. And he was the right man for the job. As the principal military adviser to the President during a time of grave danger to our country, Dick Myers was a source of wisdom, clear analysis, and broad vision. As Chairman, he helped design a thorough and innovative military strategy for victory in the war on terror. During his watch, America and our allies liberated more than 50 million people from tyranny. And General Myers helped set the military on a vital and necessary course of transformation so that America will be ready to confront and overcome the challenges of the future.

This fighter pilot is a model officer, deliberate, unflinching, and calm in a storm. He's respected in every branch and throughout the ranks of our Armed Forces. With his recent retirement after 40 years in uniform, the Nation returned Dick Myers in "as-is" condition to his wife, Mary Jo. [*Laughter*] He left the service with four stars on his shoulder, and his place in America history is secure. The United States of America is a stronger and safer nation for the integrity and the courage and leadership of General Richard Myers.

The conflicts of this young century demand a clear-eyed understanding of the

great dramas and tragedies of the 20th century. And perhaps no scholar has studied that time with as much diligence or intellectual courage as Robert Conquest. His life began in 1917, the year of the Russian Revolution, whose evil consequences he would so thoroughly and faithfully detail in "The Great Terror" and other memorable writings. The truths he told were not always in fashion, but the cautionary lessons he taught about murderous ideologies and the men who served them will always be relevant. His books have been translated into 20 languages, and there have been times and places when those books were carefully hidden.

Today, the empire he revealed is gone forever, and the works of Robert Conquest are an enduring testament of the truth. This wise and eloquent man is greatly admired by his fellow Americans and by all who love freedom.

Paul Rusesabagina also bears witness to an evil of the 20th century. He was a hotel manager in his native Rwanda when the horror began to unfold in 1994. That hotel soon became a haven amid the carnage, with Paul, his family, and more than a thousand other men, women, and children inside the compound. Without that shelter, every one of them would have almost surely have been killed during those weeks and months of merciless terror. This good man saved them by holding off the enemy with his commanding presence, his shrewd manner of negotiating, and his incredible calm amid the crisis and chaos.

Paul has insisted, quote, "I'm not a hero. I'm simply a man who made a decision to hold on to my family, my life, and my beliefs until the end." But the world came to know the story, and people everywhere can recognize heroism. And we're so honored that Paul is with us here today.

This morning across the United States, millions of Americans started their day listening to Paul Harvey. [*Laughter*] People everywhere feel like they know the man and his wife, Angel, too. And for so many Americans, no morning, Monday through Saturday, is quite complete without "Paul Harvey News and Comment." This tireless broadcaster is up every day before the sun, writing his own scripts and ad copy for an audience tuning in to more than 1,200 radio stations and the American Forces Network.

He first went on the air in 1933, and he's been heard nationwide for 54 years. Americans like the sound of his voice. His friend Danny Thomas once said to him, "You'd better be right, because you sound like God." [*Laughter*] And over the decades we have come to recognize in that voice some of the finest qualities of our country, patriotism, the good humor, the kindness, and common sense of Americans. It's always a pleasure to listen to Paul Harvey, and it's a real joy this afternoon to honor him as well.

Carol Burnett is known not just for one voice but for many, from "Eunice" to "Scarlet O'Hara"—"Starlet O'Hara." [*Laughter*] All those who've heard it will never forget her Tarzan yell. [*Laughter*] Her variety show ran for 11 years and received 25 Emmys. An even higher tribute to the show is that millions of Americans still laugh at the memory of the sketches and characters from the "Carol Burnett Show."

True to her theatrical training at UCLA, Carol has also given unforgettable performances in serious roles. Yet, it is far more than talent that has endeared Carol Burnett to the American people. It is her goodness of heart, her sincerity, and the wonderful spirit that comes through. She spent her early years in San Antonio, Texas, where they still think of her with great affection. The same goes for the whole country. Carol Burnett is welcome in every home in America. And she's welcome here at the White House today, as we pay tribute to this noble woman.

Here at the White House, we get an interesting mix of visitors. Already today

I've met with the Secretary of State, Secretary of Defense, and the Dalai Lama—and the sheriff of Mayberry. [*Laughter*] Andy Griffith first came to the people's attention with his gift for storytelling, and his own life is a mighty fine story by itself. He started out as a high school teacher, and in his amazing career, he has gained fame as an actor and received a Grammy Award for his singing. He will always be remembered for the "Andy Griffith Show" and "Matlock." Yet, he has also given powerful dramatic performances in such movies as "A Face in the Crowd."

Looking back on his Mayberry days, Andy explained the timeless appeal of the show. He said, "It was about love. Barney would set himself up for a fall, and Andy would be there to catch him." [*Laughter*] The enduring appeal of the show has always depended, and still does, on the simplicity and sweetness and rectitude of the man behind the badge. TV shows come and go, but there's only one Andy Griffith. And we thank him for being such a friendly and beloved presence in our American life.

A week ago today, the flag of the United States flew at halfstaff in memory of Rosa Parks. And in Detroit, at Mrs. Parks's funeral, worshipers heard Aretha Franklin sing "I'll Fly Away." Generations of Americans have stood in wonder at the style and voice of Aretha Franklin. One record executive put it this way: "Aretha is still the best singer in the world, bar none. She finds meanings in lyrics that the composers didn't even know they had." [*Laughter*] "She chills you, heats you, affects your soul. It's exhilarating." When Aretha Franklin recorded the song "Respect," it became the number one hit in America, and she won the first of 17 Grammy Awards.

The Queen of Soul has been a singer all her life, thanks to the early encouragement of her mother, Barbara, and her father, the Reverend C.L. Franklin. They raised their daughter to be a woman of achievement, deep character, and a loving heart. And I know they would be filled with pride this afternoon as our Nation honors Ms. Aretha Franklin.

Frank Robinson was born in Beaumont, Texas. And though it has been awhile, we are still proud to claim this Hall of Famer as a Texan. He first achieved greatness as a member of the Cincinnati Reds nearly 50 years ago. As a Red, he was the Most Valuable Player in the National League. As an Oriole, he was the Most Valuable Player in the American League. He won the American League Triple Crown in 1966, an achievement so rare that only one player has done it since. His 586 home runs make him sixth on the alltime list. His teams won five league championships and two World Series titles. Thirty years ago, he became the first African American manager in Major League Baseball. He has been named Manager of the Year in both leagues. He serves today as the skipper for the hometown team, the Washington Nationals.

Frank Robinson is a man who leads by example. His wife, Barbara, said, "He believes in rules, and he respects the game. He reveres the game." Baseball fans across America will tell you the feeling is returned. In the game we love, few names will ever command as much respect and esteem as the name of Frank Robinson.

Last year in Ohio, I ran into Jack Nicklaus and asked if he had any advice for my golf game. He said, "Sure. Quit." [*Laughter*] The game of golf takes a rare combination of raw ability and sustained concentration. Jack Nicklaus earned the distinction as one of the greats early in his career. When he edged out Arnold Palmer at the U.S. Open in 1962, Arnie said, "Now that the big guy is out of the cage, everybody better run for cover." [*Laughter*] The Golden Bear went on to win 17 more professional majors and more than 70 PGA Tour events.

Galleries across the world have admired the intense focus and unyielding competitiveness that Jack Nicklaus brings to the game. They admire, just as much, the man

himself. In every aspect of his life, Jack holds himself to a high standard. He's a great gentleman. And for his skill, grace, and class in every circumstance, Americans will always look up to the example of Jack Nicklaus.

Only a few athletes are ever known as the greatest in their sport or in their time. But when you say, "The Greatest of All Time" is in the room, everyone knows who you mean. It's quite a claim to make, but as Muhammad Ali once said, "It's not bragging if you can back it up." [*Laughter*] And this man backed it up. From the day he won the gold medal at the 1960 Olympic games, we all knew there was something special about this young fighter from Louisville, Kentucky. And his record of 56 and 5, including 37 knockouts and 19 successful title defenses, hardly begins to tell the story. Far into the future, fans and students of boxing will study the films, and some will even try to copy his style. But certain things defy imitation, the Ali shuffle, the lightning jabs, the total command of the ring, and above all, the sheer guts and determination he brought to every fight.

This is a man who once fought more than 10 rounds with a fractured jaw. And he fought to complete exhaustion and victory in that legendary clash of greats in Manila. The real mystery, I guess, is how he stayed so pretty. [*Laughter*] It probably had to do with his beautiful soul. He was a fierce fighter, and he's a man of peace, just like Odessa and Cassius Clay, Sr., believed their son could be. Across the world, billions of people know Muhammad Ali as a brave, compassionate, and charming man, and the American people are proud to call Muhammad Ali one of our own.

Our country and our world have been improved by the lives of the men and women we honor today. And now I ask the military aide to read the citations.

[*At this point, Lt. Col. John Quintas, USAF, Air Force Aide to the President, read the citations, and the President presented the medals.*]

The President. Thank you all for coming. Congratulations to our winners. And now Laura and I would like to invite you to a reception here on the State Floor.

God bless you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:36 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Lynne "Angel" Harvey, wife of Paul Harvey; and professional golfer Arnold D. Palmer.

Statement on the Terrorist Bombings in Amman, Jordan
November 9, 2005

Today's terrorist bombings in Amman were cowardly attacks on innocent Jordanians and their guests. These barbaric acts again demonstrated the terrible cruelty of the terrorists and the great toll they take on civilized society. I send my prayers and condolences and those of the American people to the families of all those killed in these attacks and to those who were wounded. To the people of Jordan and King Abdullah, we pledge our full support in their efforts to bring the terrorists to justice. Jordan is a key ally in the war on terror and will have all assistance we can offer.

Message to the Congress on Continuation of the National Emergency With Respect to Iran
November 9, 2005

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. Consistent with this provision, I have sent the enclosed notice to the *Federal Register* for publication, stating that the Iran emergency declared by Executive Order 12170 on November 14, 1979, is to continue in effect beyond November 14, 2005. The most recent notice continuing this emergency was published in the *Federal Register* on November 12, 2004 (69 *FR* 65513).

Our relations with Iran have not yet returned to normal, and the process of implementing the January 19, 1981, agreements with Iran is still underway. For these reasons, I have determined that it is necessary to continue the national emergency declared on November 14, 1979, with respect to Iran, beyond November 14, 2005.

GEORGE W. BUSH

The White House,

November 9, 2005

NOTE: This message was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on November 10. The notice of November 9 is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

Remarks Prior to Discussions With President Ali Abdallah Salih of Yemen
November 10, 2005

President Bush. Mr. President, welcome. I'm looking forward to our discussion. I'm looking forward to our continued work together to make sure that Al Qaida and people affiliated with Al Qaida are brought to justice.

Today the world saw with horror the attacks on innocent people in Jordan by killers who defile a great religion. I spoke to King Abdullah. I expressed our Nation's deep concern and compassion for those who lost their lives and their families. The bombings should remind all of us that there is an enemy in this world that is willing to kill innocent people, willing to bomb a wedding celebration, in order to advance their cause. And for those of us who love freedom and for those of us who love—who respect every human life, no matter whether you're from the West or from your neighborhood, Mr. President, we have an obligation and a duty to remain strong, remain firm, and to bring these people to justice.

And so, Mr. President, welcome.

President Salih. Thank you, Mr. President. I am delighted to have this friend, George Bush. This is probably the third meeting that we have together. And we discuss a variety of mutual issues, and our mutual objective here is the declaration of war against terrorism and extremism. We have seen it during 9/11 and after. I am here to reaffirm Yemen's position that it is clear and firm—our resolve is firm—to continue to work with the United States

and the international community in combating terror.

Since yesterday, I had the opportunity to have a variety of meetings with members of your administration. I am delighted to have the opportunity to see you and meet with you today, Mr. President. We will have a variety of issues that we will discuss, bilateral issues, as well as issues of interest to both the international community and world peace and stability.

I thank you very much for your hospitality and for receiving me.

President Bush. Thank you, sir.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:28 a.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to King Abdullah II of Jordan. President Salih spoke in Arabic, and his remarks were translated by an interpreter.

Remarks During a Meeting With Louisiana Local Officials
November 10, 2005

The President. Mayor, thanks for coming.

Mayor C. Ray Nagin. It's good to be here.

The President. And I appreciate you sharing your thoughts and ideas with Don Powell and myself. I appreciate the Commission Chairman for coming and setting out a vision for New Orleans. And I know you've been through an awful lot of tough times, and I really appreciate your working with us to help get this city up and running so the great city of New Orleans will rise once again. As I said in my speech, Mr. Mayor, I can't imagine an America without a New Orleans.

And we've got a lot of work to do, but you're making good progress, and you're showing strong leadership. I appreciate that.

Mayor Nagin. Thank you, Mr. President.

The President. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:40 p.m. in the Roosevelt Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Donald E. Powell, Chairman, Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation, who is coordinating Federal gulf coast relief efforts.

Remarks After Signing the Book of Condolence at the Jordanian Embassy
November 10, 2005

Mr. Ambassador, thank you for receiving us. We have come to your Embassy to express our heartfelt sympathies for the people of Jordan and for the families who are grieving today because of the murder of innocent people.

I spoke to His Majesty this morning and conveyed these very same thoughts. And during my conversation, as he described the fact that these bombers went into a wedding and killed people there that were there to celebrate life, killed innocent—the bombers killed innocent women and children, it struck me, Mr. Ambassador, that—once again, that we face an enemy that has no heart, an enemy that is defiling a great religion, of Islam. Today—yesterday in Jordan, Muslims died at the hands of these killers simply because they were in

the wrong hotel, simply because they wanted to be with their families and enjoy life.

This enemy must be defeated. They have no heart. They have no conscience.

I want to thank you and the good people of Jordan for standing strong against these merciless killers. And we ask for God's blessings on the people of Jordan.

NOTE: The President spoke at 4:27 p.m. In his remarks, he referred to Jordan's Ambassador to the U.S. Karim Tawfiq Kawar; and King Abdullah II of Jordan.

Statement on Agriculture Appropriations Legislation
November 10, 2005

The agriculture appropriations bill meets important priorities and holds spending below last year's level. This legislation is an important step forward in our efforts to rein in spending while maintaining our commitment to America's farmers and consumers. By pursuing progrowth economic policies and restraining spending, we can stay on track to meet my goal of cutting the deficit in half by 2009.

NOTE: The statement referred to H.R. 2744, approved November 10, which was assigned Public Law No. 109–97.

Statement on Signing the Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2006
November 10, 2005

Today, I have signed into law H.R. 2744, the "Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2006." The Act funds important agriculture, food safety, natural resource and other programs of the Federal Government.

The executive branch shall construe certain provisions of the Act that purport to require congressional committee approval for the execution of a law as calling solely for notification, as any other construction would be inconsistent with the principles enunciated by the Supreme Court of the United States in *INS v. Chadha.* These provisions include sections 705, 716, and 732, and language under the heading "Food and Drug Administration, Salaries and Expenses."

The executive branch shall construe section 715, which purports to regulate the transmission of information by employees at the Department of Agriculture, in a manner consistent with the President's constitutional authority to faithfully execute the laws and to supervise the unitary executive branch.

The executive branch shall construe section 719, which purports to regulate the transmittal of legislative recommendations by executive branch officials to the Congress, in a manner consistent with the President's constitutional authority to recommend such measures to the Congress as he deems necessary and expedient.

Several provisions of the bill relate to race or ethnicity. The executive branch shall construe such provisions in a manner consistent with the requirement that the Federal Government afford equal protection of the laws under the Due Process

Clause of the Fifth Amendment to the Constitution.

GEORGE W. BUSH

The White House,
November 10, 2005.

NOTE: H.R. 2744, approved November 10, was assigned Public Law No. 109–97.

Message to the Senate Transmitting Protocol Amending the Sweden-United States Taxation Convention
November 10, 2005

To the Senate of the United States:

I transmit herewith for the advice and consent of the Senate to ratification, a Protocol Amending the Convention Between the Government of the United States of America and the Government of Sweden for the Avoidance of Double Taxation and the Prevention of Fiscal Evasion with Respect to Taxes on Income signed at Washington on September 30, 2005 (the "Protocol"). Also transmitted for the information of the Senate is the report of the Department of State with respect to the Protocol.

The Protocol eliminates the withholding tax on certain cross-border dividend payments. The proposed Protocol is one of a few recent U.S. tax agreements to provide for the elimination of the withholding tax on dividends arising from certain direct investments. In addition, the Protocol also modernizes the Convention to bring it into closer conformity with current U.S. tax-treaty policy, including strengthening the treaty's provisions preventing so-called treaty shopping.

I recommend that the Senate give early and favorable consideration to this Protocol and that the Senate give its advice and consent to ratification.

GEORGE W. BUSH

The White House,
November 10, 2005.

Remarks at a Dinner Celebrating the 40th Anniversary of the National Endowment for the Arts and the National Endowment for the Humanities
November 10, 2005

Good evening, and welcome. Laura and I are really happy you're here. We meet tonight to celebrate the 40th anniversary of both the National Endowment for the Arts and the National Endowment for the Humanities.

We especially welcome NEA Chairman Dana Gioia and NEH Chairman Bruce Cole. And we'd like to recognize their outstanding contributions to our Nation's arts and humanities. Dana and Bruce are both distinguished scholars and authors, and under their visionary leadership, America's programs to support the arts and humanities have continued to enrich our Nation's cultural and civic life.

I also want to recognize a former head of the NEH, Lynne Cheney, and her husband. [*Laughter*]

It's also my honor to welcome Lynda Robb, whose dad had the wisdom to start both these programs. Welcome.

Over the last 40 years, the National Endowment for the Arts and the National Endowment for the Humanities have strengthened our democracy by supporting our Nation's ideals, institutions, and emerging talents. The NEA has provided support for music and dance, theater, and the arts across our great country. It has helped improve public access to education in the arts, offered workshops in writing, and brought artistic masterpieces to under-served communities.

At the same time, the NEH has done important work to preserve America's cultural treasures. And it has helped introduce millions of Americans to award-winning books, documentaries, and museum exhibitions.

These two institutions also help support the arts and humanities by encouraging great talent. This morning I awarded the National Medal of Arts and the National Humanities Medal to men and women who have made exemplary contributions to our Nation's art, culture, and scholarship. Each medal winner has helped define our era. Each has excelled and demonstrated originality, endurance, and self-discipline. And together, their creativity inspires our students and elevates our culture and enriches our nation. Congratulations to you all.

President Franklin Roosevelt once said that free nations gain new responsibilities when other countries try to turn back the clock of civilization by burning libraries and exiling their artists and thinkers. Free nations, he said, have an obligation to keep the torch of free thought and free learning burning bright.

America is a country where the light of freedom does burn bright, and by supporting our artists and scholars, we help inspire those who do not yet enjoy freedom. We defend creativity and expression because we value a free and open society. And our actions set an example for the entire world. And so, tonight I offer a toast to the brightest lights of American creativity, men and women who entertain us, inform us, and inspire us.

NOTE: The President spoke at 7:44 p.m. on the State Floor at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Lynda Johnson Robb, daughter of former President Lyndon B. Johnson.

Remarks on the War on Terror in Tobyhanna, Pennsylvania
November 11, 2005

Thank you all very much. Thank you all for coming. Please be seated. Thanks for the warm welcome. I'm glad to be back in Pennsylvania, and I'm proud to be the first sitting President to visit Monroe County. I'm especially pleased to see so many military veterans with us today. Those who have risked their lives for our freedom have the respect and gratitude of our Nation on Veterans Day and on every day.

Tobyhanna is a fitting place to commemorate Veterans Day. For the better part of a century, this facility has provided critical services for our Armed Forces. Around the clock and around the world, personnel from here maintain technology that our troops use to take the fight to the enemy. From Afghanistan to Kuwait to Baghdad International Airport, technicians from Tobyhanna are carrying out dangerous missions with bravery and skill. I know you're proud of them, and so is the Commander in Chief.

Tobyhanna is also home to a thriving community of military families. Your support for those who wear the uniform and your support of each other through difficult times brings great pride to our country.

The American people stand with our military families.

I want to thank Colonel Ellis for allowing me to come and give you this speech today. Thank you for your service to our country, Colonel Ellis. I want to thank Senator Specter and Congressman Kanjorski and Congressman Sherwood for joining us today. It was good to have them on Air Force One. I appreciate their service to our country. And I want to thank all the State and local officials, and I want to thank all the veterans.

Today our Nation pays tribute to those veterans, 25 million veterans who have worn the uniform of the United States of America. Each of these men and women took an oath to defend America, and they upheld that oath with honor and decency. Through the generations, they have humbled dictators and liberated continents and set a standard of courage and idealism for the entire world. This year, 3.5 million veterans celebrate the 60th anniversary of freedom's great victory in World War II. A handful of veterans who live among us in 2005 stood in uniform when World War I ended 87 years ago today. These men are more than 100 years old. Many of their lives have touched three different centuries, and they can all know that America will be proud of their service.

On Veterans Day, we also remember the troops who left America's shores but did not live to be thanked as veterans. On this Veterans Day, we honor the courage of those who were lost in our current struggle. We think of the families who lost a loved one; we pray for their comfort. And we remember the men and women in uniform whose fate is still undetermined, our prisoners of war and those missing in action. America must never forget their courage, and we will not stop searching until we have accounted for every soldier and sailor and airman and marine missing in the line of duty.

All of America's veterans have placed the Nation's security before their own lives. Their sacrifice creates a debt that America can never fully repay. Yet, there are certain things that Government can do. My administration remains firmly committed to serving America's veterans.

Since I took office, my administration has increased spending for veterans by $24 billion, an increase of 53 percent. In the first 4 years as President, we increased spending for veterans more than twice as much as the previous administration did in 8 years, and I want to thank the Members of the Congress and the Senate for joining me in the effort to support our veterans.

We've increased the VA's medical care budget by 51 percent, increased total outpatient visits, increased the number of prescriptions filled, and reduced the backlog of disability claims. We've committed more than $1.5 billion to modernizing and expanding VA facilities so that veterans can get better care closer to home. We've expanded grants to help homeless veterans in all 50 States and the District of Columbia, because we strongly believe no veteran who served in the blazing heat or bitter cold of foreign lands should have to live without shelter in our own country.

I've joined with the veterans groups to call on Congress to protect the flag of the United States in the Constitution of the United States. In June, the House of Representatives voted for a constitutional amendment to ban flag desecration. I urge the United States Senate to pass this important amendment.

At this hour, a new generation of Americans is defending our flag and our freedom in the first war of the 21st century. The war came to our shores on September the 11th, 2001. That morning, we saw the destruction that terrorists intend for our Nation. We know that they want to strike again. And our Nation has made a clear choice: We will confront this mortal danger to all humanity; we will not tire or rest until the war on terror is won.

In the 4 years since September the 11th, the evil that reached our shores has reappeared on other days, in other places, in Mombasa and Casablanca and Riyadh and Jakarta and Istanbul and Madrid and Beslan and Taba and Netanya and Baghdad and elsewhere. In the past few months, we have seen a new terror offensive with attacks on London and Sharm el-Sheikh, another deadly strike in Bali, and this week, a series of bombings in Amman, Jordan, that killed dozens of innocent Jordanians and their guests.

All these separate images of destruction and suffering that we see on the news can seem like random, isolated acts of madness—innocent men and women and children who have died simply because they boarded the wrong train or worked in the wrong building or checked into the wrong hotel. Yet, while the killers choose their victims indiscriminately, their attacks serve a clear and focused ideology, a set of beliefs and goals that are evil but not insane.

Some call this evil Islamic radicalism, others, militant Jihadism, and still others, Islamo-fascism. Whatever it's called, this ideology is very different from the religion of Islam. This form of radicalism exploits Islam to serve a violent, political vision: The establishment, by terrorism, subversion, and insurgency, of a totalitarian empire that denies all political and religious freedom. These extremists distort the idea of jihad into a call for terrorist murder against Christians and Hindus and Jews and against Muslims, themselves, who do not share their radical vision.

Many militants are part of a global, borderless terrorist organization like Al Qaida, which spreads propaganda and provides financing and technical assistance to local extremists and conducts dramatic and brutal operations like the attacks of September the 11th. Other militants are found in regional groups often associated with Al Qaida, paramilitary insurgencies and separatist movements in places like Somalia, the Philippines, Pakistan, Chechnya, Kashmir, and Algeria. Still others spring up in local cells, inspired by Islamic radicalism but not centrally directed. Islamic radicalism is more like a loose network with many branches than an army under a single command. Yet these operatives, fighting on scattered battlefields, share a similar ideology and vision for our world.

We know the vision of the radicals because they have openly stated it in videos and audiotapes and letters and declarations and on web sites.

First, these extremists want to end American and Western influence in the broader Middle East because we stand for democracy and peace and stand in the way of their ambitions. Al Qaida's leader, Usama bin Laden, has called on Muslims to dedicate, quote, "Their resources, their sons, and money to driving the infidels out of our lands." The tactics of Al Qaida and other Islamic extremists have been consistent for a quarter of a century: They hit us, and they expect us to run.

Last month, the world learned of a letter written by Al Qaida's number-two man, a guy named Zawahiri. And he wrote this letter to his chief deputy in Iraq, the terrorist Zarqawi. it, Zawahiri points to the Vietnam war as a model for Al Qaida. This is what he said, "The aftermath of the collapse of American power in Vietnam and how they ran and left their agents is noteworthy." The terrorists witnessed a similar response after the attacks of American troops in Beirut in 1983 and Mogadishu in 1993. They believe that America can be made to run again, only this time on a larger scale, with greater consequences.

Secondly, the militant network wants to use the vacuum created by an American retreat to gain control of a country, a base from which to launch attacks and conduct their war against nonradical Muslim governments. Over the past few decades, radicals have specifically targeted Egypt and Saudi Arabia and Pakistan and Jordan for potential takeover. They achieved their goal, for a time, in Afghanistan, and now they've

set their sights on Iraq. In his recent letter, Zawahiri writes that Al Qaida views Iraq as, quote, "The place of the greatest battle." The terrorists regard Iraq as the central front in their war against humanity. We must recognize Iraq as the central front in our war against the terrorists.

Third, these militants believe that controlling one country will rally the Muslim masses, enabling them to overthrow all moderate governments in the region and establish a radical Islamic empire that spans from Spain to Indonesia. Zawahiri writes that the terrorists, quote, "Must not have their mission end with the expulsion of the Americans from Iraq." He goes on to say: "The jihad requires several incremental goals: Expel the Americans from Iraq; establish an Islamic authority over as much territory as you can to spread its power in Iraq; extend the jihad wave to the secular countries neighboring Iraq."

With the greater economic and military and political power they seek, the terrorists would be able to advance their stated agenda, to develop weapons of mass destruction, to destroy Israel, to intimidate Europe, to assault the American people, and to blackmail our Government into isolation.

Some might be tempted to dismiss these goals as fanatical or extreme. They are fanatical and extreme, but they should not be dismissed. Our enemy is utterly committed. As Zarqawi has vowed, "We will either achieve victory over the human race, or we will pass to the eternal life." And the civilized world knows very well that other fanatics in history, from Hitler to Stalin to Pol Pot, consumed whole nations in war and genocide before leaving the stage of history. Evil men, obsessed with ambition and unburdened by conscience, must be taken very seriously, and we must stop them before their crimes can multiply.

Defeating the militant network is difficult, because it thrives like a parasite on the suffering and frustration of others. The radicals exploit local conflicts to build a culture of victimization, in which someone else is always to blame and violence is always the solution. They exploit resentful and disillusioned young men and women, recruiting them through radical mosques, as pawns of terror. And they exploit modern technology to multiply their destructive power. Instead of attending faraway training camps, recruits can now access online training libraries to learn how to build a roadside bomb or fire a rocket-propelled grenade, and this further spreads the threat of violence, even within peaceful democratic societies.

The influence of Islamic radicalism is also magnified by helpers and enablers. They've been sheltered by authoritarian regimes, allies of convenience like Iran and Syria, that share the goal of hurting America and modern Muslim governments, and use terrorist propaganda to blame their own failures on the West, on America, and on the Jews.

This week, the Government of Syria took two disturbing steps. First, it arrested Dr. Kamal Labwani for serving as an advocate for democratic reform. Then President Asad delivered a strident speech that attacked both the Lebanese Government and the integrity of the Mehlis investigation into the assassination of Lebanon's former Prime Minister. The Government of Syria must do what the international community has demanded, cooperate fully with the Mehlis investigation and stop trying to intimidate and destabilize the Lebanese Government. The Government of Syria must stop exporting violence and start importing democracy.

The radicals depend on front operations, such as corrupted charities, which direct money to terrorist activity. They are strengthened by those who aggressively fund the spread of radical, intolerant versions of Islam into unstable parts of the world. The militants are aided as well by elements of the Arab news media that incite hatred and anti-Semitism, that feed conspiracy theories and speak of a so-called American "war on Islam," with seldom a

word about American action to protect Muslims in Afghanistan and Bosnia and Somalia and Kosovo and Kuwait and Iraq or seldom a word about our generous assistance to Muslims recovering from natural disasters in places like Indonesia and Pakistan.

Some have also argued that extremism has been strengthened by our actions in Iraq, claiming that our presence in that country has somehow caused or triggered the rage of radicals. I would remind them that we were not in Iraq on September the 11th, 2001. The hatred of the radicals existed before Iraq was an issue, and it will exist after Iraq is no longer an excuse. The Government of Russia did not support Operation Iraqi Freedom, and yet, the militants killed more than 150 Russian schoolchildren in Beslan.

Over the years, these extremists have used a litany of excuses for violence, the Israeli presence on the West Bank, the U.S. military presence in Saudi Arabia, the defeat of the Taliban, or the Crusades of 1,000 years ago. In fact, we're not facing a set of grievances that can be soothed and addressed. We're facing a radical ideology with the inalterable objectives to enslave whole nations and intimidate the world. No act of ours invited the rage of killers, and no concession, bribe, or act of appeasement would change or limit their plans for murder. On the contrary, they target nations whose behavior they believe they can change through violence. Against such an enemy, there is only one effective response: We will never back down; we will never give in; we will never accept anything less than complete victory.

The murderous ideology of the Islamic radicals is the great challenge of our new century. Yet in many ways, this fight resembles the struggle against communism in the last century. Like the ideology of communism, Islamic radicalism is elitist, led by a self-appointed vanguard that presumes to speak for the Muslim masses. Bin Laden says his own role is to tell Muslims, quote, "What is good for them and what is not." What this man who grew up in wealth and privilege considers good for poor Muslims is that they become killers and suicide bombers. He assures them that this road—that this is the road to paradise, though he never offers to go along for the ride. [*Laughter*]

Like the ideology of communism, our new enemy teaches that innocent individuals can be sacrificed to serve a political vision. And this explains their coldblooded contempt for human life. We have seen it in the murders of Daniel Pearl and Nicholas Berg and Margaret Hassan and so many others. In a courtroom in the Netherlands, the killer of Theo van Gogh turned to the victim's grieving mother and said, "I don't feel your pain because I believe you're an infidel." And in spite of this veneer of religious rhetoric, most of the victims claimed by the militants are fellow Muslims.

Recently, in the town of Huwaydar, Iraq, a terrorist detonated a pickup truck parked along a busy street lined with restaurants and shops, just as residents were gathering to break the daylong fast observed during Ramadan. The explosion killed at least 25 people and wounded 34. When unsuspecting Muslims breaking their Ramadan fast are targeted for death or 25 Iraqi children are killed in a bombing or Iraqi teachers are executed at their school, this is murder, pure and simple, the total rejection of justice and honor and morality and religion.

These militants are not just the enemies of America or the enemies of Iraq, they are the enemies of Islam, and they are the enemies of humanity. And we have seen this kind of shameless cruelty before in the heartless zealotry that led to the gulags, the Cultural Revolution, and the Killing Fields.

Like the ideology of communism, our new enemy pursues totalitarian aims. Its leaders pretend to be an aggrieved party, representing the powerless against imperial

enemies. In truth, they have endless ambitions of imperial domination, and they wish to make everyone powerless, except themselves. Under their rule, they have banned books and desecrated historical monuments and brutalized women. They seek to end dissent in every form, to control every aspect of life, to rule the soul itself. While promising a future of justice and holiness, the terrorists are preparing a future of oppression and misery.

Like the ideology of communism, our new enemy is dismissive of free peoples, claiming that men and women who live in liberty are weak and decadent. Zarqawi has said that Americans are, quote, "The most cowardly of God's creatures." But let us be clear: It is cowardice that seeks to kill children and the elderly with car bombs and cuts the throat of a bound captive and targets worshipers leaving a mosque. It is courage that liberated more than 50 million people from tyranny. It is courage that keeps an untiring vigil against the enemies of rising democracies. And it is courage in the cause of freedom that will once again destroy the enemies of freedom.

And Islamic radicalism, like the ideology of communism, contains inherent contradictions that doom it to failure. By fearing freedom, by distrusting human creativity and punishing change and limiting the contributions of half a population, this ideology undermines the very qualities that make human progress possible and human societies successful. The only thing modern about the militants' vision is the weapons they want to use against us. The rest of their grim vision is defined by a warped image of the past, a declaration of war on the idea of progress itself. And whatever lies ahead in the war against this ideology, the outcome is not in doubt. Those who despise freedom and progress have condemned themselves to isolation and decline and collapse. Because free peoples believe in the future, free peoples will own the future.

We didn't ask for this global struggle, but we're answering history's call with confidence and with a comprehensive strategy. Defeating a broad and adaptive network requires patience, constant pressure, and strong partners in Europe and in the Middle East and North Africa and Asia and beyond. Working with these partners, we're disrupting militant conspiracies; we're destroying their ability to make war; and we're working to give millions in a troubled region a hopeful alternative to resentment and violence.

First, we're determined to prevent attacks of the terrorist networks before they occur. We are reorganizing our Government to give this Nation a broad and coordinated homeland defense. We're reforming our intelligence agencies for the incredibly difficult task of tracking enemy activity, based on information that often comes in small fragments from widely scattered sources, both here and abroad. And we're acting, along with governments from other countries, to destroy the terrorist networks and incapacitate their leadership.

Together with our partners, we've disrupted a number of serious Al Qaida terrorist plots since September the 11th, including several plots to attack inside the United States. Our coalition against terror has killed or captured nearly all those directly responsible for the September the 11th attacks. We've captured or killed several of bin Laden's most serious deputies: Al Qaida managers and operatives in more than 24 countries; the mastermind of the USS *Cole* bombing, who was chief of Al Qaida's operations in the Persian Gulf; the mastermind of the bombings in Jakarta and Bali; a senior Zarqawi terrorist planner, who was planning attacks in Turkey; and many of their senior leaders in Saudi Arabia.

Because of this steady progress, the enemy is wounded, but the enemy is still capable of global operations. Our commitment is clear: We will not relent until the organized international terror networks are

exposed and broken and their leaders are held to account for their murder.

Second, we're determined to deny weapons of mass destruction to outlaw regimes and to their terrorist allies who would use them without hesitation. The United States, working with Great Britain and Pakistan and other nations, has exposed and disrupted a major black-market operation in nuclear technology led by A.Q. Khan. Libya has abandoned its chemical and nuclear weapons programs, as well as its long-range ballistic missiles. And in the past year, America and our partners in the Proliferation Security Initiative have stopped more than a dozen shipments of suspect weapons technology, including equipment for Iran's ballistic missile program.

This progress has reduced the danger to free nations, but it has not removed it. Evil men who want to use horrendous weapons against us are working in deadly earnest to gain them. And we're working urgently to keep the weapons of mass murder out of the hands of the fanatics.

Third, we're determined to deny radical groups the support and sanctuary of outlaw regimes. State sponsors like Syria and Iran have a long history of collaboration with terrorists, and they deserve no patience from the victims of terror. The United States makes no distinction between those who commit acts of terror and those who support and harbor them, because they're equally guilty of murder.

Fourth, we're determined to deny the militants control of any nation which they would use as a home base and a launching pad for terror. This mission has brought new and urgent responsibilities to our Armed Forces. American troops are fighting beside Afghan partners and against remnants of the Taliban and their Al Qaida allies. We're working with President Musharraf to oppose and isolate the militants in Pakistan. We're fighting the regime remnants and terrorists in Iraq. The terrorist goal is to overthrow a rising democracy, claim a strategic country as a haven for terror, destabilize the Middle East, and strike America and other free nations with increasing violence. Our goal is to defeat the terrorists and their allies at the heart of their power, so we will defeat the enemy in Iraq.

Our coalition, along with our Iraqi allies, is moving forward with a comprehensive plan. Our strategy is to clear, hold, and build. We're working to clear areas from terrorist control, to hold those areas securely, and to build lasting, democratic Iraqi institutions through an increasingly inclusive political process. In recent weeks, American and Iraqi troops have conducted several major assaults to clear out enemy fighters in Baghdad and parts of Iraq.

Two weeks ago, in Operation Clean Sweep, Iraq and coalition forces raided 350 houses south of Baghdad, capturing more than 40 of the terrorist killers. Acting on tips from local citizens, our forces have recently launched air strikes against terrorist safe houses in and around the towns of Ubaydi and Husaybah. We brought to justice two key senior Al Qaida terrorist leaders. And in Mosul, coalition forces killed an Al Qaida cell leader named Muslet, who was personally involved in at least three videotaped beheadings. We're on the hunt. We're keeping pressure on the enemy.

And thousands of Iraqi forces have been participating in these operations, and even more Iraqis are joining the fight. Last month, nearly 3,000 Iraqi police officers graduated from 10 weeks of basic training. They'll now take their places along other brave Iraqis who are taking the fight to the terrorists across their own country. Iraqi police and security forces are helping to clear terrorists from their strongholds, helping to hold onto areas that we've cleared. They're working to prevent the enemy from returning. Iraqi forces are using their local expertise to maintain security and to build political and economic institutions that will help improve the lives of their fellow citizens.

At the same time, Iraqis are making inspiring progress toward building a democracy. Last month, millions of Iraqis turned out to vote, and they approved a new Constitution that guarantees fundamental freedoms and lays the foundation for lasting democracy. Many more Sunnis participated in this vote than in January's historic elections, and the level of violence was lower.

Now, Iraqis are gearing up for December 15th elections, when they will go to the polls to choose a government under the new Constitution. The new government will serve a 4-year term, and it will represent all Iraqis. Even those who voted against the Constitution are now organizing and preparing for the December elections. Multiple Sunni Arab parties have submitted a list of candidates, and several prominent Sunni politicians are running on other slates. With two successful elections completed and a third coming up next month, the Iraqi people are proving their determination to build a democracy united against extremism and violence.

The work ahead involves great risk for Iraqis and for American and coalition forces. We've lost some of our Nation's finest men and women in this war on terror. Each of these men and women left grieving families and left loved ones at home. Each of these patriots left a legacy that will allow generations of fellow Americans to enjoy the blessings of liberty. Each loss of life is heartbreaking. And the best way to honor the sacrifice of our fallen troops is to complete the mission and to lay the foundation of peace for generations to come.

The terrorists are as brutal an enemy as we've ever faced, unconstrained by any notion of our common humanity or by the rules of warfare. No one should underestimate the difficulties ahead, nor should they overlook the advantages we bring to this fight.

Some observers look at the job ahead and adopt a self-defeating pessimism. It is not justified. With every random bombing, with every funeral of a child, it becomes more clear that the extremists are not patriots or resistance fighters; they're murderers at war with the Iraqi people themselves.

In contrast, the elected leaders of Iraq are proving to be strong and steadfast. By any standard or precedent of history, Iraq has made incredible political progress—from tyranny, to liberation, to national elections, to the ratification of a constitution in the space of 2½ years.

I have said, as Iraqis stand up, Americans will stand down. And with our help, the Iraqi military is gaining new capabilities and new confidence with each passing month. At the time of our Fallujah operations a year ago, there were only a few Iraqi army battalions in combat. Today, there are nearly 90 Iraqi army battalions fighting the terrorists alongside our forces. General David Petraeus says, "Iraqis are in the fight. They're fighting and dying for their country, and they're fighting increasingly well." This progress is not easy, but it is steady. And no fairminded person should ignore, deny, or dismiss the achievements of the Iraqi people.

And our debate at home must also be fairminded. One of the hallmarks of a free society and what makes our country strong is that our political leaders can discuss their differences openly, even in times of war. When I made the decision to remove Saddam Hussein from power, Congress approved it with strong bipartisan support. I also recognize that some of our fellow citizens and elected officials didn't support the liberation of Iraq. And that is their right, and I respect it. As President and Commander in Chief, I accept the responsibilities and the criticisms and the consequences that come with such a solemn decision.

While it's perfectly legitimate to criticize my decision or the conduct of the war, it is deeply irresponsible to rewrite the history of how that war began. Some Democrats and antiwar critics are now claiming we manipulated the intelligence and misled the American people about why we went

to war. These critics are fully aware that a bipartisan Senate investigation found no evidence of political pressure to change the intelligence community's judgments related to Iraq's weapons programs.

They also know that intelligence agencies from around the world agreed with our assessment of Saddam Hussein. They know the United Nations passed more than a dozen resolutions citing his development and possession of weapons of mass destruction. And many of these critics supported my opponent during the last election, who explained his position to support the resolution in the Congress this way: "When I vote to give the President of the United States the authority to use force, if necessary, to disarm Saddam Hussein, it is because I believe that a deadly arsenal of weapons of mass destruction in his hands is a threat and a grave threat to our security." That's why more than 100 Democrats in the House and the Senate, who had access to the same intelligence, voted to support removing Saddam Hussein from power.

The stakes in the global war on terror are too high and the national interest is too important for politicians to throw out false charges. These baseless attacks send the wrong signal to our troops and to an enemy that is questioning America's will. As our troops fight a ruthless enemy determined to destroy our way of life, they deserve to know that their elected leaders who voted to send them to war continue to stand behind them. Our troops deserve to know that this support will remain firm when the going gets tough. And our troops deserve to know that whatever our differences in Washington, our will is strong; our Nation is united; and we will settle for nothing less than victory.

The fifth element of our strategy in the war on terror is to deny the militants future recruits by replacing hatred and resentment with democracy and hope across the broader Middle East. This is difficult, and it's a long-term project, yet there is no alternative to it. Our future and the future of the region are linked. If the broader Middle East is left to grow in bitterness, if countries remain in misery while radicals stir the resentment of millions, then that part of the world will be a source of endless conflict and mounting danger in our generation and for the next.

If the peoples of that region are permitted to choose their own destiny and advance by their own energy and participation of free men and women, then the extremists will be marginalized, and the flow of violent radicalism to the rest of the world will slow and eventually end. By standing for hope and freedom of others, we make our own freedom more secure.

America is making this stand in practical ways. We're encouraging our friends in the Middle East, including Egypt and Saudi Arabia, to take the path of reform, to strengthen their own societies in the fight against terror by respecting the rights and choices of their own people. We're standing with dissidents and exiles against oppressive regimes, because we know that the dissidents of today will be the democratic leaders of tomorrow. We're making our case through public diplomacy, stating clearly and confidently our belief in self-determination and the rule of law and religious freedom and equal rights for women, beliefs that are right and true in every land and in every culture.

As we do our part to confront radicalism and to protect the United States, we know that a lot of vital work will be done within the Islamic world itself. And the work is beginning. Many Muslim scholars have already publicly condemned terrorism, often citing Chapter 5, Verse 32 of the Koran, which states that killing an innocent human being is like killing all of humanity and saving the life of one person is like saving all humanity. After the attacks of July—on July 7th in London, an imam in the United Arab Emirates declared, "Whoever does such a thing is not a Muslim nor a religious person." The time has come for

responsible Islamic leaders to join in denouncing an ideology that exploits Islam for political ends and defiles a noble faith.

Many people of the Muslim faith are proving their commitment at great personal risk. Everywhere we've engaged the fight against extremism, Muslim allies have stood up and joined the fight, becoming partners in this vital cause. Afghan troops are in combat against Taliban remnants. Iraqi soldiers are sacrificing to defeat Al Qaida in their country. These brave citizens know the stakes: The survival of their own liberty, the future of their own region, the justice and humanity of their own tradition. And the United States of America is proud to stand beside them.

With the rise of a deadly enemy and the unfolding of a global ideological struggle, our time in history will be remembered for new challenges and unprecedented dangers. And yet this fight we have joined is also the current expression of an ancient struggle between those who put their faith in dictators and those who put their faith in the people. Throughout history, tyrants and would-be tyrants have always claimed that murder is justified to serve their grand vision, and they end up alienating decent people across the globe. Tyrants and would-be tyrants have always claimed that regimented societies are strong and pure, until those societies collapse in corruption and decay. Tyrants and would-be tyrants have always claimed that free men and women are weak and decadent, until the day that free men and women defeat them.

We don't know the course of our own struggle will take or the sacrifices that might lie ahead. We do know, however, that the defense of freedom is worth our sacrifice. We do know the love of freedom is the mightiest force of history, and we do know the cause of freedom will once again prevail.

Thank you for coming. May God bless our veterans. May God bless our troops in harm's way, and may God continue to bless the United States of America.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:45 a.m. at the Tobyhanna Army Depot. In his remarks, he referred to Col. Tracy L. Ellis, USA, commander, Tobyhanna Army Depot; Ayman Al-Zawahiri, founder of the Egyptian Islamic Jihad and senior Al Qaida associate; senior Al Qaida associate Abu Musab Al Zarqawi; Kamal Labwani, secretary general, Liberal Democratic Union of Syria; President Bashar al-Asad of Syria; Detlev Mehlis, head, United Nations International Independent Investigation Commission into the assassination of former Prime Minister Rafiq Hariri of Lebanon; Mohammed Bouyeri, who was convicted of the November 2, 2004, murder of film director Theo van Gogh; Anneke van Gogh, mother of Theo van Gogh; Abd al-Rahim al-Nashiri, Al Qaida's chief of operations for the Persian Gulf; Nurjaman Riduan Isamuddin (also known as Hambali), Al Qaida's chief operational planner in Southeast Asia; A.Q. Khan, former head of Pakistan's nuclear weapons program; President Pervez Musharraf of Pakistan; Nashwan Mijhim Muslet, senior Al Qaida terrorist cell leader in Mosul, Iraq; Lt. Gen. David H. Petraeus, USA, former commander, Multi-National Security Transition Command—Iraq; and former President Saddam Hussein of Iraq.

The President's Radio Address
November 12, 2005

Good morning. This coming Tuesday, America's Medicare beneficiaries can begin to enroll for new prescription drug coverage. This new benefit is the greatest advance in health care for seniors and Americans with disabilities since the creation of Medicare 40 years ago.

In the past, Medicare would pay tens of thousands of dollars for ulcer surgery but not a few hundred dollars for prescription drugs that eliminate the cause of most ulcers. In the past, Medicare would pay more than $100,000 to treat the effects of a stroke but not $1,000 per year for blood-thinning drugs that could have prevented the stroke in the first place.

With this new prescription drug benefit, Medicare will now help pay for the prescription drugs that can prevent serious illness. Seniors will get more choices and better treatment, and America will get a Medicare system to fit the needs of the 21st century.

The new coverage will begin on January 1st. If you or someone you love depends on Medicare, I urge you to learn about the new choices you have, so you can make a decision and enroll. Enrollment is entirely voluntary, and seniors who want to keep their Medicare coverage the way it is will be able to do so. But for those who want to take advantage of this new drug benefit, enrolling by May 15th will ensure you the lowest possible premiums. The sooner you enroll, the sooner you can have the peace of mind this coverage will bring.

The new prescription drug coverage will benefit people on Medicare in three important ways. First, it will help all seniors and Americans with disabilities pay for prescription drugs, no matter how they pay for their medicine now. Seniors who have no drug coverage and have average prescription drug costs will see savings of at least 50 percent. And seniors who have the highest drug costs will receive special help. Starting in January, once a senior has spent $3,600 in a year, Medicare will cover 95 percent of all prescription costs.

Second, this new coverage will offer more and better health care choices than ever before. That means seniors can save more and get the coverage they want, not a "one size fits all" plan that does not meet their needs. Every prescription drug plan will offer a broad choice of generic and brand-name drugs, and seniors will be able to select any Medicare prescription drug plan in their area that fits their needs and their medical history.

Third, this new prescription drug coverage will provide extra help to low-income seniors and beneficiaries with disabilities. About a third of the seniors will be eligible for a Medicare prescription drug benefit that includes little or no premiums, low deductibles, and no gaps in coverage. On average, Medicare will pick up the tab for more than 95 percent of the costs that low-income seniors pay for prescription drugs.

The days of low-income seniors having to make painful sacrifices to pay for their prescription drugs are now coming to an end. Last month, those of you on Medicare received in the mail a handbook called "Medicare and You" that includes detailed information about your options. Citizen groups and faith-based organizations across America are also working to spread the word so that Medicare recipients can get their questions answered and make informed choices.

If you have Medicare, I urge you to take advantage of this opportunity to learn more. Review your choices and make the decision that is right for you. If you have family or friends on Medicare, you can help too. Helping can be as simple as showing an older neighbor how to fill out a form or making a call for your mom or dad. You

can get information 24 hours a day by calling 1–800–MEDICARE or by visiting the official Medicare web site at medicare.gov.

In the 21st century, preventing and treating illness often require prescription drugs. In the coming months, we will help every Medicare recipient make a confident choice about their prescription drug coverage. By expanding drug coverage for our Nation's seniors, we will help all Americans on Medicare receive the modern health care they deserve.

Thank you for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 7:52 a.m. on November 11 in the Cabinet Room at the White House for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on November 12. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on November 11 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 War on Terror in Anchorage, Alaska
November 14, 2005

Thank you all. Thanks for the warm welcome. Laura and I were in the neighborhood—[*laughter*]—thought we'd come by to say hello to the Nation's "Arctic Warriors." We're proud to stand with the courageous airmen of Elmendorf Air Force Base, the soldiers of Fort Richardson, the Coast Guard men and women here in Alaska, the men and women of the Alaskan Command, and all those who wear the uniform of our country.

The General is right about one thing—[*laughter*]—I did live in Alaska. [*Laughter*] In 1974, and I remember it just the way it looked coming in on Air Force One, this vast, majestic land, so beautiful and full of decent, honorable, independent-minded people, people who love their country.

Here at Elmendorf Air Force Base, you're defending our Nation's frontiers. You're securing freedom for future generations of Americans. Service men and women have departed this base to help liberate Iraq and Afghanistan, assist tsunami victims in Indonesia, and help those hit by the recent earthquake in Pakistan. Your courage and commitment are saving lives every day. First thing I want to tell you is the American people are grateful for your service and so is the Commander in Chief.

I also want to thank the military families who are with us today. [*Applause*] Please be seated, unless you don't have a seat. [*Laughter*] I know that for many of you, Alaska is a long way from home, and it gets especially lonely when your loved ones are deployed on dangerous missions in distant lands. You have built a strong and close-knit community here. You support each other, and you support your loved ones who stand in harm's way. I am proud of our men and women in the Armed Forces, and I am grateful for the military families who stand behind them.

I want to thank General Fraser and his wife, Rena. I appreciate Brigadier General Hawk Carlisle—kind of sounds like a general, Hawk Carlisle. [*Laughter*] I appreciate Craig Christensen and Hazen Baron.

I want to thank Senator Lisa Murkowski for flying all the way from Washington today to make sure she was here to see her fellow Alaskans as well as to be with the President. It means a lot to me. I don't know if you know this or not, but after this speech, she said, "Make sure you keep it short," because she's got to fly back to Washington this evening to make important votes for the people of Alaska. Lisa, thank you for your service. She's doing a fine

job, and I see she brought her parents with her.

Governor and First Lady Nancy, thank you all for being here. We're proud to share the stage with you. I want to thank the Lieutenant Governor and his wife, Carolyn, for joining us. I appreciate the mayor of the City of Anchorage, Mayor Begich, and his wife, Deborah, for joining us today. I want to welcome former Governor Walter Hickel here today. He's a man who served his country and his State with dignity and class. I know we got a lot of State and statehouse folks and local folks; thank you all for being here. But most of all, thank you. Thanks for taking time out of your day to let me come by and share some thoughts with you.

In the 20th century, the men and women of Elmendorf Air Force Base and Fort Richardson stood guard on the frontlines of freedom, serving in the shadow of the Soviet Union. From here, you gave our Nation "Top Cover," standing ready to defend America at a moment's notice. And because of the courage of men and women like those who served here, the cause of liberty prevailed in the cold war, and millions who once lived in chains now live in freedom.

On September the 11th, 2001, history called on our Nation to defend freedom once again. On that morning more than 4 years ago, Americans witnessed the violence and the hatred of a new enemy. We saw the terrorists' destructive vision for us and for all who love freedom. And in the face of this threat, our Nation has made a clear choice: We will confront this mortal danger; we will stay on the offensive; we will not wait to be attacked again; and we will press on until this war is won.

This is a vital mission for our Armed Forces, and you're helping to carry out that mission. Since September the 11th, 2001, thousands of men and women from Elmendorf, Fort Richardson, U.S. Army Alaska, and Alaska National Guard have served in Afghanistan, Iraq, and other fronts in the war on terror. The 517th Airlift Squadron has served for over a year in support of Operation Enduring Freedom. Crews from the 68th Medical Company have saved the lives of our injured and wounded in Afghanistan. The 172d Stryker Combat Team is taking the fight to the enemy with Task Force Freedom in Mosul. Soldiers of the 95th Chemical Company are in Kuwait dealing with port decontamination and hazardous material operations. And the Fourth Battalion of the 123d Aviation Regiment has been flying support missions throughout Iraq and Kuwait. From the deserts of Iraq to the mountains of Afghanistan, America's "Arctic Warriors" are leaving their mark and leaving a legacy of freedom.

Each of you is a volunteer. You stepped forward and took an oath to defend America. And every day you put on your uniforms, you reflect our Nation's highest values and our greatest hopes. Through your hard work and dedication to duty, you are sacrificing to build a better and safer world for all Americans. And as you defend our freedom, the American people stand with you.

Every man and woman who volunteers to defend our Nation deserves an unwavering commitment to the mission and a clear strategy for victory. And a clear strategy begins with a clear understanding of the enemy we face. For more than 4 years, we've seen the brutal nature of the terrorists. They've targeted the innocent in many countries, people from all walks of life. In Casablanca, they killed diners enjoying their evening meal. In Bali, they killed tourists who were on a holiday. In Beslan, they killed Russian school children. They've murdered workers in Riyadh, commuters in Madrid, and hotel guests in Jakarta, and guests at a wedding celebration in Amman, Jordan. They kill Iraqi children in Baghdad.

The tragic images of innocent victims can make it seem like these terrorist attacks are random and isolated acts of madness. While these killers choose their victims indiscriminately, their attacks flow from an ideology and a terrifying vision for the

world. Their acts are evil, but they're not insane. Some call this evil Islamic radicalism; others, militant jihadism; still others, Islamo-fascism. Whatever we choose to call this enemy, we must recognize that this ideology is very different from the tenets of the great religion of Islam. This form of radicalism exploits Islam to serve a violent, political vision: The establishment by terrorism, subversion, and insurgency of a totalitarian empire that denies all political and religious freedom.

We know this vision of the radicals because they openly state it. They put it in videos and audiotapes and letters and declarations and on web sites. These extremists want to end American and Western influence in the broader Middle East, because we stand for democracy and peace and stand in the way of their ambitions.

The tactics of Al Qaida and other Islamic extremists have been consistent for a quarter century: They hit us, and they expect us to run. The terrorists witnessed our response after the attacks on American troops in Beirut in 1983 and in Mogadishu in 1993, and they concluded that America can be made to run again, only this time on a larger scale, with greater consequences. The terrorists are mistaken. America will never run. We will stand; we will fight; and we will win the war on terror.

The terrorists want to use the vacuum that would be created by an American retreat to gain control of a country, to build a base from which to launch attacks and conduct their war against America and nonradical Muslim governments. That's what they tell us. That's their stated goal. Over the past few decades, radicals have specifically targeted Egypt and Saudi Arabia and Pakistan and Jordan for potential takeover. And for a time, they achieved their goal in Afghanistan, until they came face to face with the men and women of the United States Armed Forces.

In Afghanistan, we put the terrorists on the run. We routed them, and now they've set their sights on another country. They're trying to turn Iraq into what Afghanistan was under the Taliban, a terrorist sanctuary from which they can plan and launch attacks against our people. The terrorists regard Iraq as the central front in their war against humanity, and we must recognize Iraq as the central front in the war on terror.

These militants believe that controlling one country will rally the Muslim masses, enabling them to overthrow moderate governments in the region and establish a radical Islamic empire that reaches from Indonesia to Spain. If they are not stopped, the terrorists will be able to advance their agenda to develop weapons of mass destruction, to destroy Israel, to intimidate Europe, to break our will, and blackmail our government into isolation. I make you this solemn commitment: That's not going to happen so long as I'm the President of the United States.

Some might be tempted to dismiss the terrorist goals as fanatical or extreme. They are fanatical and extreme, but we cannot afford to dismiss them. Evil men, obsessed with ambition and unburdened by conscience, must be taken very seriously. Against such an enemy, there is only one effective response: We will never back down; we will never give in; and we will never accept anything less than complete victory.

We didn't ask for this global struggle, but we're answering history's call with confidence and with a comprehensive strategy to win this war.

First, we are determined to prevent attacks by terrorist networks, by protecting the homeland and working with our allies to destroy the terrorist networks and incapacitate their leadership. Together with our coalition partners, we've disrupted a number of serious Al Qaida terrorist plots since September the 11th, including several plots here on the homeland. Our coalition against terror has stayed on the offensive. We have killed or captured nearly all those directly responsible for the September the

11th attacks. We have killed or captured several of bin Laden's most senior deputies, including that—the man who planned the U.S.—the bombing of the USS *Cole*. We've killed or captured Al Qaida and—and managers—Al Qaida managers and operatives in countries all around the world. We will stay on the hunt. We will keep the pressure on these people. We will not relent until the terror networks that threaten us are exposed and broken and their leaders are held to account for their murder.

Second, we are determined to deny weapons of mass destruction to outlaw regimes and to their terrorist allies who would use them without hesitation. Working with Great Britain and Pakistan and other nations, we exposed and disrupted a major black-market operation in nuclear technology led by A.Q. Khan. Libya has abandoned its chemical and nuclear weapons programs as well as its long-range ballistic missiles. And in the last year, America and our partners in the Proliferation Security Initiative have stopped more than a dozen shipments of suspect weapons technology, including equipment for Iran's ballistic missile program. We're going to continue to deny the world's most dangerous men the world's most dangerous weapons.

Third, we're determined to deny radical groups the support and sanctuary of outlaw regimes. So I've laid out a clear doctrine: The United States makes no distinction between those who commit acts of terror and those who support and harbor the terrorists, because they're equally guilty of murder. Any government that chooses to be an ally of terror has also chosen to be an enemy of civilization, and the civilized world will hold those regimes to account.

Fourth, we're determined to deny the militants control of any nation which they would use as a home base and a launching pad for terror. This mission has brought new and urgent responsibilities to all who wear the uniform. American troops are fighting beside our Afghan partners against the remnants of the Taliban and their Al Qaida allies. And you're fighting alongside courageous Iraqis against the remnants of a regime and a network of terrorists who want to stop the advance of a free Iraq. Our goal is to defeat the terrorists and their allies in the heart of their power, so we will defeat the enemy in Iraq.

As we pursue the terrorists, we have a strategy to go forward. Our military is helping to train Iraqi security forces so they can defend their people and take the fight to the enemy. And we're making steady progress. With every passing month, more and more Iraqi forces are standing up, and the Iraqi military is gaining new capabilities and new confidence. At the time of our Fallujah operations just a year ago, there were only a few Iraqi army battalions in combat. Today, there are nearly 90 Iraqi army battalions fighting the terrorists alongside our forces. American and Iraqi troops are conducting major assaults to clear out enemy fighters in Baghdad and other parts of Iraq. Iraqi police and security forces are helping clear the terrorists from their strongholds, hold on to the areas we've cleared, and prevent the enemy from returning.

Our strategy can be summed up this way: As the Iraqis stand up, we will stand down. And when our commanders on the ground tell me that the Iraqi forces can defend their freedom, our troops will come home with the honor they have earned.

And the second part of our strategy is a political strategy. Iraqis are making inspiring progress toward building a democracy. A month ago, millions of Iraqis turned out to vote for a constitution that guarantees fundamental freedoms and lays the foundation for a lasting democracy. In a few weeks, Iraqis will vote again, to choose a fully constitutional government to lead them for the next 4 years. This country is making amazing progress from the days

of being under the thumb of a brutal tyrant. In 2½ years, they've gone from tyranny to an election for a transitional government, to the ratification of a constitution, to the election of a free government. It's amazing progress when you think about it.

The Iraqi people are proving their determination to build a future founded on democracy and peace. And the United States of America will help them succeed.

The fifth element of our strategy in the war on terror is to deny the militants future recruits by replacing hatred and resentment with democracy and hope across the broader Middle East. If the Middle East is left to grow in bitterness, if countries remain in misery while radicals stir the resentments of millions, then that part of the world will be a source of endless conflict and mounting danger. If the peoples of that region are permitted to choose their own destiny and advance by their own energy and participation as free men and free women, then the extremists will be marginalized, and the flow of violent radicalism to the rest of the world will slow and eventually end. History has proven that free nations are peaceful nations and that democracies do not fight their neighbors. By advancing the hope of freedom and democracy for others, we make our own freedom more secure.

The work ahead involves great risk. A time of war is a time of sacrifice, and the greatest burden falls on our military families. We've lost some of our Nation's finest men and women in the war on terror. Each of these men and women left grieving families and loved ones back home. Each loss is heartbreaking. And the best way to honor the sacrifices of our fallen troops is to complete the mission and lay the foundation of peace for generations to come.

The outcome of this war will affect every single American, and that makes it a subject of vital debate. And it's important to be clear about the facts. When our Nation was attacked on September the 11th, leaders of both political parties recognized a new reality: If we wait for threats to fully materialize, we will have waited too long. We had to take a hard look at every threat to America after September the 11th, and when we did, one stood apart: Saddam Hussein.

Under Saddam's dictatorship, Iraq was the only country in the world where American military pilots faced regular attack. Iraq was the only country that had used chemical weapons on its own people, invaded its neighbors, and fought a war against the United States and a great coalition. Iraq was only one of seven countries listed as a state sponsor of terror, and it was judged by intelligence agencies around the globe to possess weapons of mass destruction. After more than a decade of diplomacy, we gave Saddam Hussein a final chance to comply with the United Nations Security Council resolutions, ordering him to disclose, disarm, or face serious consequences. When he refused, we had a choice. Do we take the word of a madman and forget the lessons of September the 11th, or do we take action to defend our country? Given that choice, I will defend America every time.

Combat forces of the United States, Great Britain, Australia, Poland, and other countries enforced the demands of the United Nations and put an end to Saddam's regime. Because we acted, the Iraqi people now live in freedom, and the people of the United States are safer.

Reasonable people can disagree about the conduct of the war, but it is irresponsible for Democrats to now claim that we misled them and the American people. Leaders in my administration and Members of the United States Congress from both political parties looked at the same intelligence on Iraq and reached the same conclusion: Saddam Hussein was a threat.

Let me give you some quotes from three senior Democrat leaders: First, and I quote, "There is unmistakable evidence that Saddam Hussein is working aggressively to

develop nuclear weapons," end quote. Another senior Democrat leader said, "The war against terrorism will not be finished as long as Saddam Hussein is in power," end quote. Here's another quote from a senior Democrat leader: "Saddam Hussein, in effect, has thumbed his nose at the world community, and I think the President is approaching this in the right fashion," end quote.

They spoke the truth then, and they're speaking politics now. The truth is that investigations of intelligence on Iraq have concluded that only one person manipulated evidence and misled the world, and that person was Saddam Hussein. In early 2004, when weapons inspector David Kay testified that he had not found weapons of mass destruction in Iraq, he also testified that, quote, "Iraq was in clear material violation of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1441. They maintained programs and activities, and they certainly had the intentions at a point to resume their programs. So there was a lot they wanted to hide because it showed what they were doing that was illegal."

Eight months later, weapons inspector Charles Duelfer issued a report that found, quote, "Saddam Hussein so dominated the Iraqi regime that its strategic intent was his alone. He wanted to end sanctions while preserving the capability to reconstitute his weapons of mass destruction when the sanctions were lifted."

Some of our elected leaders have opposed this war all along. I disagreed with them, but I respect their willingness to take a consistent stand. Yet some Democrats who voted to authorize the use of force are now rewriting the past. They are playing politics with this issue, and they are sending mixed signals to our troops and the enemy. And that's irresponsible.

As our troops fight a ruthless enemy determined to destroy our way of life, they deserve to know that their elected leaders who voted to send them into war continue to stand behind them. Our troops deserve to know that this support will remain firm when the going gets tough. And our troops deserve to know that whatever our differences in Washington, our will is strong; our Nation is united; and we will settle for nothing less than victory.

Thanks to our men and women in uniform, the Iraqi and Afghan people are building democracies, and as they do so, they inspire people across the broader Middle East. And freedom's advance has only just begun. In our lifetime, we've seen the power of freedom to conquer evil and take root in previously unfamiliar soil. Freedom is the mightiest force of history because the desire for liberty is embedded in the soul of every man, woman, and child on the face of this Earth. If we are steadfast, if we do our duty, this young century will be freedom's century, and we will have done our duty by laying the foundation of peace for generations to come.

Laura and I are honored to be here with those who wear our Nation's uniform. We're honored to be here with those who support those who wear our Nation's uniform. And we're really happy to be back in Alaska. May God bless our troops. May God bless their families, and may God continue to bless the United States of America. Thank you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:35 p.m. in Hangar One at Elmendorf Air Force Base. In his remarks, he referred to Lt. Gen. Douglas M. Fraser, USAF, commander, Alaskan Command, Alaskan North American Aerospace Defense Command Region, 11th Air Force, and Joint Task Force—Alaska; Brig. Gen. Herbert J. "Hawk" Carlisle, USAF, commander, 3d Wing, Elmendorf Air Force Base; Brig. Gen. Craig N. Christensen, USA, assistant adjutant general and director, Alaska Army National Guard; Col. Hazen L. Baron, USA, chief of staff, 82d Airborne Division; Gov. Frank H. Murkowski and Lt. Gov. Loren Leman of Alaska; Mayor Mark Begich of Anchorage, AK; Abd al-Rahim al-Nashiri, Al Qaida's chief of operations for the

Persian Gulf; A.Q. Khan, former head of Pakistan's nuclear program; David Kay, former CIA Special Adviser for Strategy Regarding Iraqi Weapons of Mass Destruction Programs; and Charles Duelfer, Special Adviser to the Director of Central Intelligence. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of these remarks.

Statement on the Doha Development Agenda
November 14, 2005

Prime Minister Blair has challenged World Trade Organization members to ensure that the Doha Development Agenda fulfills its market-opening potential that would help lift hundreds of millions of people out of poverty. I welcome and endorse his call for action to ensure a successful outcome to the Doha round.

To achieve this ambitious agenda, all WTO members will have to do their part. To give impetus to Doha, I called for the reduction and then elimination of trade-distorting agricultural subsidies and tariffs. If the EU offers similar real cuts to agricultural subsidies and tariffs, others will also have to come forward with significant proposals to cut tariffs and reduce barriers on manufactured goods and services.

The Doha Development Agenda is vital to promoting development. Through the pursuit of the Millennium Development Goals and the G–8 agreement to cancel 100 percent of the debt of the world's most heavily indebted nations, we have made good progress on aid and debt relief. However, trade is the engine for a sustained expansion of prosperity around the world. Through a successful Doha round, we can realize that opportunity.

Statement on Signing the Foreign Operations, Export Financing, and Related Programs Appropriations Act, 2006
November 14, 2005

Today, I have signed into law H.R. 3057, the "Foreign Operations, Export Financing, and Related Programs Appropriations Act, 2006." The Act provides funds in support of United States foreign policy objectives abroad.

The Executive Branch shall construe as advisory certain provisions of the Act that purport to direct or burden the President's constitutional authority to conduct foreign relations, either by purporting to direct the content of certain international negotiations and communications or by directing the Executive Branch to collaborate with other entities in the development of foreign policy. These provisions include sections 506(a), 514, 551, 561(a) and (d), 562, 575(a), 590(b) and 593.

The Executive Branch shall also construe certain provisions of the Act that purport to make consultation with the Congress a precondition to the execution of the law as calling for, but not mandating, such consultation, as is consistent with the Constitution's provisions concerning the separate powers of the Congress to legislate and of the President to execute the laws. Such provisions include sections 506(e), 509(b),

512, 534(k), 543(b), 564(b), 576(c), 595, and provisions under the headings "Transition Initiatives," USAID; "Andean Counterdrug Initiative," Department of State; and "Debt Restructuring," Department of the Treasury.

GEORGE W. BUSH

The White House,

November 14, 2005.

NOTE: H.R. 3057, approved November 14, was assigned Public Law No. 109–102.

Message to the Congress Giving Notification of Intent To Enter an Agreement on Tariff Treatment of Multi-Chip Integrated Circuits
November 14, 2005

To the Congress of the United States:

Consistent with section 2103(a)(1) of the Trade Act of 2002, I am pleased to notify the Congress of my intention to enter into an agreement with the European Union, Japan, the Republic of Korea, and Taiwan on tariff treatment for multi-chip integrated circuits. Multi-chip integrated circuits are semiconductor devices used in computers, cell phones, and other high-technology products.

United States-based companies are the principal suppliers to the world of multi-chip integrated circuits. In 2004, global sales of finished multi-chip integrated circuits were estimated to be $4.2 billion, and U.S. semiconductor companies account for roughly half of those sales.

The United States, the European Union, the Republic of Korea, and Taiwan will apply zero duties on these products as of an agreed date. The target date for entry into force of the Agreement is January 1, 2006. Japan already applies zero duties on these products and expects to ratify the Agreement formally in 2006. Further, although all major producers of multi-chip integrated circuits will be parties to the Agreement, we will seek to build on this Agreement by joining together to work in the World Trade Organization to increase the number of countries granting duty-free treatment to these products.

GEORGE W. BUSH

The White House,
November 14, 2005.

NOTE: This message was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on November 16.

The President's News Conference With Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi of Japan in Kyoto, Japan
November 16, 2005

Prime Minister Koizumi. First, I would like to express our sincere welcome to the visit of the President and Mrs. Bush. We are very happy to have an excellent weather today, and I'm very happy that President and Mrs. Bush enjoyed the beauty of this ancient city of Kyoto.

Before this meeting, the President and myself had the pleasure of taking a pleasant walk through Golden Pavilion Temple. This is in a wonderful environment where we

can confirm the importance of our bilateral relations. We have been able to have the candid exchange of views between the two—bilateral issues, particularly the importance of our relations in the global context, in other words, from the viewpoint of the U.S.-Japan alliance in the world. That is the overriding context of our talk today.

We emphasized and confirmed the importance of closer consultation between the two. The United States remains the most indispensable ally to Japan. And if—the better our bilateral relations, the easier it would be for us to establish better relations with China and other neighboring countries and the countries of other—in the world.

There is no such thing as U.S.-Japan relationship too close. Some people maintain that maybe we would pay more attention to other issues, probably it would be better to strengthen the relationship with other countries. I do not side with such views. The U.S.-Japan relationship, the closer, more intimate it is, it is easier for us to behave and establish better relations with China, with South Korea, and other nations in Asia. This is my firm conviction on the basis of my thinking. Based upon our past, the importance of our bilateral relationships will not change. That is the basic understanding with which I had a talk with the President and in which we will seek the future direction in establishing and seeking the prosperity and stability of our nation.

At the same time, when we look at the issue such as the United Nations reform, the importance of our bilateral relationship looms even larger. We should recognize that. And we have been able to have a candid exchange. The United States expressed strong support to us becoming permanent member of the Security Council and would like to deepen our cooperation on that issue.

On the issue of terrorism, this is going to be a long-lasting, difficult path we have to follow and—in close cooperation with the international community so that each nation will have a peaceful and stable atmosphere. In Iraq as well as in Afghanistan, the people themselves should work harder to establish themselves as a nation, and we are pledged to provide our utmost assistance for that goal.

Further, concerning the issue of realignment and transformation of the U.S. forces in Japan and the reduction of burden on the local community, and the beef issue—BSE issue—and other future-oriented issues, such as bird influenza, that is the issue which requires closer collaboration between the two. But fundamentally, the importance of our bilateral relations should be recognized. If we do that, and then I hope that we would be able to continue to act as an ally, as a partner, on its own, autonomous and independent—[*inaudible*]—in fulfilling the responsibility in the international community.

We were able to have very candid exchange of views, and we hope that we would like to continue to have this similar relationship of trust so that we can perform our obligations and duties jointly, collaboratively, with the United States for the benefit of the international community. That is all.

President Bush. Prime Minister, thank you very much for your warm hospitality. Laura and I are so honored to be here in Kyoto, as well as in this beautiful Guest House.

It's no secret in my country that you and I have got a good relationship. I value you as a close friend. I appreciate our candid discussions, just like we had today. Relationships—or the relationship between the United States and Japan is a vital relationship, and it's a very strong relationship. And a strong relationship enables us to work together to help keep the peace.

I admire the Prime Minister's political courage. I haven't had a chance to publicly congratulate him on winning his election. But he did so, and he did so in a way

that confirms the great strength of democracy. He said, "I'm going to take my message to the people, and we'll let the people make the decision as to whether or not there ought to be reforms here in Japan." And as a result of your courageous decision, Mr. Prime Minister, you prevailed. And I want to congratulate you for that.

We've got a good friend in Japan when it comes to spreading democracy and freedom. I appreciate the contributions of the Japanese people in both Iraq and Afghanistan. Today I was able to tell the Prime Minister about important progress that is being made in the Middle East. The international crossing at Rafah will be opened up for the first time in a while and should be open by the 25th of November. Other crossings will be opened up as well. The seaport construction will begin. Travel between Gaza and the West Bank will take place. My point is, is that the freedom movement, the democracy movement, has got a very good chance of taking hold in the Middle East, in the Holy Land. And as it does, it is more likely that we'll be able to achieve the peace that we all want.

I also, in international affairs, made it very clear to us—the United States made it very clear to the Prime Minister that our position has not changed on a permanent seat for Japan in the United Nations Security Council. I hope I'm viewed as the kind of fellow, when I say something, I mean it. I have said that consistently, and I still mean that, Mr. Prime Minister.

We talked about North Korea, and I appreciate the Prime Minister's understanding and willingness to join with five other nations in making it clear to the leader of North Korea that in order for that nation to be accepted in the international community, that it must verifiably dismantle all nuclear weapons programs. And I want to thank you for your strong stand on that, Mr. Prime Minister. We also join you in our concern about the abductee issue in North Korea.

We talked about trade. We both agree that the Doha round must proceed. We both recognize that we've got work to do. The United States has made a very strong offer about agricultural subsidies. And again, I appreciate your understanding of this very important issue, Mr. Prime Minister.

We also talked about beef. And the Prime Minister and his Government has taken a study on the issue and has confirmed that U.S. beef would be safe. And I appreciate the fact that we're progressing on this issue.

We also talked about the need to continue to coordinate our aid, our development aid, and we've got a mechanism to do just that. Well, Japan has been incredibly generous with taxpayers' money, the taxpayers' dollars to help those who suffer. And so has the United States. And I—the better we coordinate, the more likely it is we'll be able to work together to solve the problems we all want.

I appreciate you bringing up avian flu. One of the important topics that we'll be discussing in South Korea is the need for us to work together to detect and share information on avian flu, on a potential outbreak of avian flu. And so this is an issue of international concern, and the closer we all work together on this issue, the more likely it is we'll be able to do our job of protecting our fellow citizens against a potential pandemic.

Finally, I do want to congratulate the Prime Minister on his reforms. We're an active trading partner, bilateral trading partner with Japan, and it makes it easier to trade when the Japanese economy is growing. And we were reminiscing about my first trip to Tokyo. The newly elected President and the Prime Minister and I talked about the need to make sure our respective economies grew, and he talked about the idea of reforming the economy in order to create growth. And sure enough, it worked. The economic GDP grew at 4.5 percent annual rate in the first half of 2005,

and I congratulate you on that, Mr. Prime Minister. That's good news. It's good news for the Japanese people; it's also good news for your trading partners. It's hard to trade with somebody who's broke. It's easier to trade with somebody whose economy is growing.

And so, Mr. Prime Minister, congratulations on your strong leadership. Thank you very much for your friendship. I look forward to continuing to work with you throughout my Presidency and your term as the Prime Minister.

Prime Minister Koizumi. We'd like to move on to the Q&A session. First of all, from the Japanese side, please. Any questions?

U.S. Forces in Japan

Q. I have a question to both of you, Prime Minister Koizumi and President Bush. First of all, transformation. In your consultations, specifically, what kind of views were exchanged? Especially with the interim report after the two-plus-two, there's already objection being raised by the local communities in Okinawa. Prime Minister, how will you be responding as they proceed to the final report? And President Bush, what are your expectations towards Japan?

Prime Minister Koizumi. Now, with regards to the transformation of U.S. forces in Japan, the question just raised, the Foreign Minister, the head of the National Defense Agency, as well as the Secretary of State and the Secretary of Defense of the United States, have been repeating various detailed discussions. And the interim report was just announced very recently. And Okinawa, where the bases are located, as well as various local communities, are objecting and rebutting.

Thinking back, if you're asked, "Are you for or against having a base," naturally, one would respond, "I am against." I think that's the gut feeling of the Japanese people. However, when we think about peace and security and safety, that is the context in which Japan can achieve economic growth. And in order to be able to benefit from safety and peace, we have to pay a certain cost. And that is what security is all about.

So that in mind, with regards to the local communities that are against the idea, we've been trying to persuade them with regards to the position we are placed in. And they are, in fact, enjoying the security being offered through the U.S.-Japan alliance, and therefore, we hope that the local communities will rethink that very hard and take up the issue of transformation very seriously in that context.

The Government of Japan will have to make great efforts towards the resolution of this issue. Now, this is an issue that may require some time, but we are hoping that the proposal set forth can be realized, and therefore, we will remain united as a government and make that the method.

President Bush. My attitude on the issue is that our Government negotiated in good faith with the Japanese Government and that Japan, being a democracy as it is, will work out the issues according to, you know, the leadership of the Prime Minister and the will of the people.

Press Secretary Scott McClellan. Dana Bash [Cable News Network].

Senate Action on Iraq

Q. Thank you, sir. Sir, as you probably know, the Senate rejected earlier today measures that would have required a timetable for withdrawal in Iraq, but a Republican resolution was overwhelmingly passed that called for more information from your administration to clarify and recommend changes to U.S. policy in Iraq. So is that evidence that your party is increasingly splitting with you, sir, on Iraq? And is it an open challenge to you—is that open challenge to you embarrassing while you're traveling abroad?

President Bush. I, first of all, appreciated the fact that the Senate, in a bipartisan fashion, rejected an amendment that would

have taken our troops out of Iraq before the mission was complete. To me that was a positive step by the United States Senate.

Secondly, the Senate did ask that we report on progress being made in Iraq, which we're more than willing to do. That's to be expected. That's what the Congress expects. They expect us to keep them abreast of a plan that is going to work. It's a plan that we have made very clear to the Senate and the House, and that is the plan that we will train Iraqis, Iraqi troops to be able to take the fight to the enemy. And as I have consistently said, as the Iraqis stand up, we will stand down.

I view this as an amendment consistent with our strategy and look forward to continue to work with the Congress. It is important that we succeed in Iraq. A democracy in Iraq will bring peace for generations to come. And we're going to. The Iraqi people want us to succeed. The only reason we won't succeed is if we lose our nerve and the terrorists are able to drive us out of Iraq by killing innocent lives. But I view this as positive developments on the Hill.

Japan's Role in Iraq

Q. Concerning the dispatch of self-defense forces to Iraq, the 14th of next month is the time limit of the stationing. What kind of explanation did you make to the President about that? And how did President Bush evaluate that—appreciate Japan's position on this? And what do you expect Japan to do further in Iraq on this issue?

Prime Minister Koizumi. Concerning Japan's assistance toward Iraq, including the activities of the self-defense forces, we will want to see that Iraqi people, themselves, bring democratic and stable nation by the power of the Iraqis, themselves. And they are making the efforts toward that goal. Certainly there are political difficulties, but they are making progress.

So, against that background, as a responsible member of the international community, Japan should seriously consider what we could do to help the situation there. That has been our position, and there is no change in this—in our basic stance.

What kind of assistance we are going to make in December? First, toward the reconstruction of Iraq, what we can do—that first, we have to think about, and then multilateral forces and other nations are involved in the helping reconstruct Iraq. As a member of the international community, we have to join them. And further, on the basis of the importance of the U.S.-Japan alliance, we have to take all those things in a comprehensive manner, so that we seriously think what we could do to help the Iraq situation, and we make judgment on that basis.

President Bush. Obviously, the extent to which the Japanese Government wants to give reconstruction money to Iraq is up to the Japanese Government. And as to the deployment of troops, that's up to the Government. That's what happens in democracies—government make decisions that they're capable of living with. And that's what we said, "Do the best you can do. Make up your own mind. It's your decision, not mine."

Press Secretary McClellan. George Condon [Copley News Service].

China and Taiwan

Q. Mr. President, can you elaborate on your advice to China as to how much you want them to emulate Taiwan? Specifically, do you want the People's Republic to copy the governmental structure of Taiwan?

President Bush. I'm going to be giving a speech on this subject here pretty soon. I hope you pay attention to it, George. My message to the region is, is that the region is better off as democracies spread. If you really think about this part of the world at the beginning of World War II, there was two democracies in the entire Pacific region, Australia and New Zealand. And today, there's a variety of democracies, and this is a peaceful part of the world.

I believe that societies are—become stable and whole societies as they give people

more say in the government. And so my message is universal, not necessarily trying to compare one system to another. In other words, you asked me about, should I say to China, "You've got to emulate Taiwan." What I say to the Chinese, as well as others, is that a free society is in your interests. To allow people to worship freely, for example, in your society is part of a stable, mature society, and that leadership should not fear freedoms within their society.

As to the Taiwan-China issue, my message has been consistently clear, and that is, is that we support the "one China" policy, three communiques, and the Taiwan Relations Act, and neither side should unilaterally change the status quo. I will repeat that today. I will repeat it in China as well, and the reason why it's important for this issue to be solved peacefully, for the—both sides to reconcile their differences through dialog. And I'll continue to encourage dialog on the topic. Thank you.

Prime Minister Koizumi. This concludes this meeting.

NOTE: The President's news conference began at 12:01 p.m. at the Kyoto State Guest House. In his remarks, he referred to Chairman Kim Chong-il of North Korea; and Yutaka Inoue, former President, House of Councillors of Japan. Prime Minister Koizumi referred to Minister of Foreign Affairs Taro Aso of Japan; and Fukushiro Nukaga, Director-General, Japanese Defense Agency. Prime Minister Koizumi and some reporters spoke in Japanese, and their remarks were translated by an interpreter.

Remarks in Kyoto
November 16, 2005

Konichiwa. Mr. Chairman, thank you very much for your kind introduction, and thank you for this invitation. Laura and I are pleased to be back in Japan, and we appreciate the warm welcome that we received here in Kyoto. We were so honored to stay at the Kyoto State Guest House. It's a fantastic facility. I know the folks of this community have great pride in the guest house, and you should. Kyoto served as the capital of Japan for more than 1,000 years, and it is still the cultural heart of this great nation. It's a proud city where ancient teahouses and temples keep this country's traditions alive and scientists from its universities win Nobel Prizes. Kyoto is a symbol of Japan's transformation into a nation that values its freedom and respects its traditions.

I have experienced this transformation of your country in a highly personal way. During World War II, my father and a Japanese official named Junya Koizumi were on opposite sides of a terrible war. Today, their sons serve as elected leaders of their respected nations. Prime Minister Koizumi is one of my best friends in the international community. We have met many times during my Presidency. I know the Prime Minister well. I trust his judgment. I admire his leadership, and America is proud to have him as an ally in the cause of peace and freedom.

The relationship between our countries is much bigger than the friendship between a President and a Prime Minister. It is an equal partnership based on common values, common interests, and a common commitment to freedom. Freedom has made our two democracies close allies. Freedom is the basis of our growing ties to other nations in the region. And in the 21st century, freedom is the destiny of every man, woman, and child from New Zealand to the Korean Peninsula.

Freedom is the bedrock of our foundation with Japan. At the beginning of World War II, this side of the Pacific had only two democracies, Australia and New Zealand. And at the end of World War II, some did not believe that democracy would work in your country. Fortunately, American leaders like President Harry Truman did not listen to the skeptics, and the Japanese people proved the skeptics wrong by embracing elections and democracy.

As you embraced democracy, you adapted it to your own needs and your own circumstances, so Japanese democracy is different from American democracy. You have a Prime Minister, not a President. Your Constitution allows for a monarchy that is a source of national pride. Japan is a good example of how a free society can reflect a country's unique culture and history while guaranteeing the universal freedoms that are the foundation of all genuine democracies.

By founding the new Japan on these universal principles of freedom, you have changed the face of Asia. With every step toward freedom, your economy flourished and became a model for others. With every step toward freedom, you showed that democracy helps governments become more accountable to their citizens. And with every step toward freedom, you became a force for peace and stability in this region, a valued member of the world community, and a trusted ally of the United States.

A free Japan has transformed the lives of its citizens. The spread of freedom in Asia started in Japan more than a half century ago, and today, the Japanese people are among the freest in the world. You have a proud democracy. You enjoy a standard of living that is one of the highest in the world. By embracing political and economic liberty, you have improved the lives of all your citizens, and you have shown others that freedom is the surest path to prosperity and stability.

A free Japan has helped transform the lives of others in the region. The investment you have provided your neighbors helped jump-start many of Asia's economies. The aid that you send helps build critical infrastructure and delivers relief to victims of earthquakes and typhoons and tsunamis. And the alliance that you have made with the United States is the pillar of stability and security for a region and a source of confidence in Asia's future.

A free Japan is helping to transform the world. Japan and the United States send more aid overseas than any other two countries in the world. Today in Afghanistan, Japanese aid is building a highway that President Karzai says is essential for the economic recovery of this newly democratic nation. In Iraq, Japan has pledged nearly $5 billion for reconstruction, and you have sent your self-defense forces to serve the cause of freedom in Iraq's al-Muthanna Province. At the start of this young century, Japan is using its freedom to advance the cause of peace and prosperity around the world, and the world is a better place because of Japanese leadership.

Japan has also shown that once people get a taste for freedom, they want more—because the desire for freedom is written in the hearts of every man and woman on this Earth. With each new generation that grows up in freedom, the expectations of citizens rise, and the demand for accountability grows. Here in Japan, Prime Minister Koizumi has shown leadership by pushing crucial reforms to open your economy and make Japan's institutions more responsive to the needs of its people. The Prime Minister knows that nations grow in wealth and stature when they trust in the wisdom and talents of their people, and that lesson is now spreading across this great region.

Freedom is the bedrock of America's friendship with Japan, and it is the bedrock of our engagement with Asia. As a Pacific nation, America is drawn by trade and values and history to be a part of the future of this region. The extraordinary economic growth in the Pacific Rim has opened new

possibilities for progress. It has raised new challenges that affect us all. These challenges include working for free and fair trade, protecting our people from new threats like pandemic flu, and ensuring that emerging economies have the supplies of energy they need to continue to grow. We have also learned that as freedom spreads throughout Asia and the world, it has deadly enemies, terrorists who despise freedom's progress and who want to stop it by killing innocent men, women, and children, and intimidating their governments. I have come to Asia to discuss these common challenges, at the bilateral level during visits with leaders like Prime Minister Koizumi and at the regional level through the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation summit. These issues are all vital, and by addressing them now, we will build a freer and better future for all our citizens.

Our best opportunity to spread the freedom that comes from economic prosperity is through free and fair trade. The Doha round of negotiations in the World Trade Organization gives us a chance to open up markets for goods and services and farm products all across the globe. Under Doha, every nation will gain, and the developing world stands to gain the most. The World Bank projects that the elimination of trade barriers could lift hundreds of millions of people out of poverty. And the greatest obstacle to a successful Doha round is the reluctance in many parts of the developed world to dismantle the tariffs and barriers and trade-distorting subsidies that isolate the world's poor from the great opportunities of this century.

My administration has offered a bold proposal for Doha that would substantially reduce agricultural tariffs and trade-distorting subsidies in a first stage and, over a period of 15 years, eliminate them altogether. Pacific Rim leaders who are concerned about the harmful effects of high tariffs and farm subsidies need to come together to move the Doha round forward on agriculture as well as on services and manufactured goods. And this year's summit in Korea gives APEC a chance to take a leadership role before next month's WTO meeting in Hong Kong.

APEC is the premier forum in the Asia-Pacific region for addressing economic growth, cooperation, trade, and investment. Its 21-member economies account for nearly half of all world trade. By using its influence to push for an ambitious result in the Doha round, APEC can help create a world trading system that is freer and fairer and helps spread prosperity and opportunity throughout the Asian-Pacific region.

As we come together to advance prosperity, we must also come together to ensure the health and safety of our citizens. As economies open up, they create new opportunities, but this openness also exposes us to new risks. In an age of international travel and commerce, new diseases can spread quickly. We saw the need for international cooperation and transparency 3 years ago, when a previously unknown virus called SARS appeared in rural China. When an infected doctor carried the virus out of China, it spread to Vietnam and to Singapore and to Canada within a month. Before long, the SARS virus had spread to nearly every continent and killed hundreds of people. By one estimate, the SARS outbreak cost the Asian-Pacific region about $40 billion. The lesson of this experience is clear: We all have a common interest in working together to stop outbreaks of deadly new viruses so we can save the lives of people on both sides of the Pacific.

We now face a new and potentially more deadly threat from avian flu, which has infected bird populations across Asia and elsewhere. I am glad to see that governments around the region are already taking steps to prevent avian flu from becoming a pandemic. The World Health Organization is coordinating the global response to this threat, and the way forward is through greater openness, greater transparency, and

greater cooperation. At the forthcoming summit, I look forward to discussing ways to help this region prepare for and respond to the threat of a pandemic. Every nation in the world has an interest in helping to detect and contain any outbreak before it can spread. At home, my country is taking important steps so that we are prepared in the event of an outbreak. And as the nations of Asia work to prevent a pandemic and protect their people from the scourge of avian flu, America will stand by their side.

As we address these challenges to public health, we must also confront the challenge of energy security in a tight global market where demand is growing. Asian nations understand that the best way to create opportunity and alleviate poverty is through economic growth. As their economies grow, they are using more energy. Over the last 3 years, the United States has launched a series of initiatives that will help these countries meet their energy needs while easing demand on global markets, reducing pollution, and addressing the long-term challenge of climate change. These initiatives range from cleaner use of coal to ethanol and biodiesel to emission-free hydrogen vehicles to solar and wind power to clean-burning methane from mines, landfills, and farms.

This summer, we took an important step toward these goals by forming the Asian-Pacific Partnership on Clean Development. Together with Australia and China and India, Japan and South Korea, we will focus on practical ways to make the best practices and latest energy technologies available to all. And as nations across this region adapt these practices and technologies, they will make their factories and powerplants cleaner and more efficient. I plan to use my visit to the region to build on the progress we are making. By working together, we will promote economic growth and reduce emissions and help build a better and cleaner world.

As we work together to meet these common challenges, we must continue to strengthen the ties of trust between our nations. And the best way to strengthen the ties of trust between nations is by advancing freedom within nations. Free nations are peaceful nations. Free nations do not threaten their neighbors, and free nations offer their citizens a hopeful vision for the future. By advancing the cause of liberty throughout this region, we will contribute to the prosperity of all and deliver the peace and stability that can only come with freedom.

And so the advance of freedom in Asia has been one of the greatest stories in human history, and in the young century now before us, we will add to that story. Millions in this region now live in thriving democracies. Others have just started down the road of liberty, and the few nations whose leaders have refused to take even the first steps to freedom are finding themselves out of step with their neighbors and isolated from the world. Even in these lonely places, the desire for freedom lives, and one day freedom will reach their shores as well.

Some Asian nations have already built free and open societies. And one of the most dramatic examples is the Republic of Korea, our host for the APEC summit. Like many in this part of the world, the South Koreans were for years led by governments that closed their door to political reform but gradually opened up to the global economy. By embracing freedom in the economic realm, South Korea transformed itself into an industrial power at home and a trading partner abroad.

As South Korea began opening itself up to world markets, it found that economic freedom fed the just demands of its citizens for greater political freedom. The economic wealth that South Korea created at home helped nurture a thriving middle class that eventually demanded free elections and a democratic government that would be accountable to the people. We admire the

struggle the South Korean people made to achieve their democratic freedom and the modern nation they have built with that freedom. South Korea is now one of the world's most successful economies and one of Asia's most successful democracies. It is also showing leadership in the world by helping others who are claiming their own freedom. At this hour, Korean forces make up the third largest contingent in the Multi-National Force in Iraq, and by helping the Iraqis build a free society in the heart of the Middle East, South Korea is contributing to a more peaceful and hopeful world.

Taiwan is another society that has moved from repression to democracy as it liberalized its economy. Like South Korea, the people of Taiwan for years lived under a restrictive political state that gradually opened up its economy. And like South Korea, the opening to world markets transformed the island into one of the world's most important trading partners. And like South Korea, economic liberalization in Taiwan helped fuel its desire for individual political freedom, because men and women who are allowed to control their own wealth will eventually insist on controlling their own lives and their own future.

Like South Korea, modern Taiwan is free and democratic and prosperous. By embracing freedom at all levels, Taiwan has delivered prosperity to its people and created a free and democratic Chinese society. Our "one China" policy remains unchanged. It is based on three communiques, the Taiwan Relations Act, and our belief that there should be no unilateral attempts to change the status by either side—the status quo by either side. The United States will continue to stress the need for dialog between China and Taiwan that leads to a peaceful resolution of their differences.

Other Asian societies have taken some steps toward freedom, but they have not yet completed the journey. When my father served as the head of our Nation's diplomatic mission in Beijing 30 years ago, an isolated China was recovering from the turmoil unleashed by the Cultural Revolution. In the late 1970s, China's leaders took a hard look at their country, and they resolved to change. They opened the door to economic development, and today the Chinese people are better fed, better housed, and enjoy better opportunities than they ever had in their history.

As China reforms its economy, its leaders are finding that once the door to freedom is opened even a crack, it can not be closed. As the people of China grow in prosperity, their demands for political freedom will grow as well. President Hu has explained to me his vision of "peaceful development," and he wants his people to be more prosperous. I have pointed out that the people of China want more freedom to express themselves, to worship without state control, to print Bibles and other sacred texts without fear of punishment. The efforts of Chinese people to—China's people to improve their society should be welcomed as part of China's development. By meeting the legitimate demands of its citizens for freedom and openness, China's leaders can help their country grow into a modern, prosperous, and confident nation.

Access to American markets has played an important role in China's economic development, and China needs to provide a level playing field for American businesses seeking access to China's market. The United States supported China's entry into the World Trade Organization because a China that abides by the same global rules as everyone else will contribute to a free and fair world trading system. When I met President Hu in New York recently, he said that China would bring more balance in our trade and protect intellectual property. I welcomed those commitments, just as I welcomed China's announcement in July that it would implement a flexible, market-based exchange system for its currency. These statements are a good beginning, but

China needs to take action to ensure these goals are fully implemented. The textile agreement our two nations reached last week shows that with hard work and determination, we can come together to resolve difficult trading issues. The agreement adds certainty and predictability for businesses in both America and China. I look forward to frank discussions with President Hu at APEC and in Beijing about our need to find solutions to our trade differences with China.

China can play a positive role in the world. We welcome the important role China has assumed as host of the six-party talks aimed at bringing peace to the Korean Peninsula. We look forward to resolving our trade differences in a spirit of mutual respect and adherence to global rules and standards. And we encourage China to continue down the road of reform and openness because the freer China is at home, the greater the welcome it will receive abroad.

Unlike China, some Asian nations still have not taken even the first steps toward freedom. These regimes understand that economic liberty and political liberty go hand in hand, and they refuse to open up at all. The ruling parties in these countries have managed to hold onto power. The price of their refusal to open up is isolation, backwardness, and brutality. By closing the door to freedom, they create misery at home and sow instability abroad. These nations represent Asia's past, not its future.

We see that lack of freedom in Burma, a nation that should be one of the most prosperous and successful in Asia but is instead one of the region's poorest. Fifteen years ago, the Burmese people cast their ballots, and they chose democracy. The government responded by jailing the leader of the prodemocracy majority. The result is that a country rich in human talent and natural resources is a place where millions struggle simply to stay alive. The abuses by the Burmese military are widespread and include rape and torture and execution and forced relocation. Forced labor, trafficking in persons, and use of child soldiers and religious discrimination are all too common. The people of Burma live in the darkness of tyranny, but the light of freedom shines in their hearts. They want their liberty, and one day, they will have it.

The United States is also concerned with the fate of freedom in Northeast Asia, where great powers have often collided in the past. The Korean Peninsula is still caught in the past. An armistice—a truce freezes the battle lines from a war that has never really come to an end. The pursuit of nuclear weapons threatens to destabilize the region. Satellite maps of North Korea show prison camps the size of whole cities and a country that at night is clothed almost in complete darkness.

In this new century, China, Japan, and Russia have joined with the United States and South Korea to find a way to help bring peace and freedom to this troubled peninsula. The six-party talks have produced commitments to rid the Korean Peninsula of nuclear weapons. These commitments must be implemented. That means a comprehensive diplomatic effort from all countries involved, backed by firm resolve. We will not forget the people of North Korea. The 21st century will be freedom's century for all Koreans, and one day, every citizen of that peninsula will live in dignity and freedom and prosperity at home, and in peace with their neighbors abroad.

In our lifetimes, we have already been given a glimpse of this bright future. The advance of freedom and prosperity across the Asian continent has set a hopeful example for all in the world. And though the democracies that have taken root in Asia are new, the dreams they express are ancient. Thousands of years before Thomas Jefferson or Abraham Lincoln, a Chinese poet wrote that, quote, "The people should be cherished . . . the people are the root of a country; the root firm, the country is tranquil." Today, the people of Asia have made their desire for freedom clear—and

that their countries will only be tranquil when they are led by governments of, by, and for the people.

In the 21st century, freedom is an Asian value because it is a universal value. It is freedom that enables the citizens of Asia to live lives of dignity. It is freedom that has unleashed the creative talents of the Asian people. It is freedom that gives the citizens of this continent confidence in the future of peace for their children and grandchildren. And in the work that lies ahead, the people of this region can know: You have a partner in the American Government and a friend in the American people.

On behalf of my country, thank you all very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:18 p.m. at the Kyoto Kaikan. In his remarks, he referred to Yoshihisa Akiyama, chairman, Kansai Economic Federation, who introduced the President; Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi of Japan, and his father, Junya Koizumi; President Hamid Karzai of Afghanistan; President Hu Jintao of China; and Aung San Suu Kyi, leader of the National League for Democracy of Burma.

Message to the Congress Transmitting Proposed Legislation To Implement the United States-Bahrain Free Trade Agreement

November 16, 2005

To the Congress of the United States:

I am pleased to transmit legislation and supporting documents to implement the United States-Bahrain Free Trade Agreement (the "Agreement"). This Agreement enhances our bilateral relationship with a strategic friend and ally in the Middle East region and will promote economic growth and prosperity in both nations.

In negotiating this Agreement, my Administration was guided by the objectives set out in the Trade Act of 2002. The Agreement reflects my Administration's commitment to opening markets and expanding opportunities for American workers, farmers, ranchers, and businesses. The Agreement will open Bahrain's market for U.S. manufactured goods, agricultural products, and services. As soon as it enters into force, the Agreement will eliminate tariffs on all manufactured goods that the United States sells to Bahrain and immediately remove Bahrain's import duties on over 80 percent of U.S. agricultural products. The Agreement is also one of the most comprehensive ever negotiated to reduce barriers to trade in services and will create new opportunities for U.S. services firms.

The Agreement contains procedures that will facilitate cooperation between the United States and Bahrain on environmental and labor matters. The labor chapter of the Agreement reinforces Bahrain's recent legislative actions to expand democracy and improve the protection of worker rights, including trade union rights. Provisions in the Agreement requiring effective enforcement of environmental laws will contribute to high levels of environmental protection.

The approval of this Agreement will be another significant step towards creating a Middle East Free Trade Area by 2013. This Agreement offers the United States yet another opportunity to encourage economic reform in a moderate Muslim nation as we have done through our free trade agreements with Jordan and Morocco. Leaders in Bahrain are supporting the pursuit of social and economic reforms in the region, encouraging foreign investment connected to broad-based development, and providing

better protection for women and workers. It is strongly in our national interest to embrace and encourage these reforms, and passing this legislation is a crucial step toward that end.

GEORGE W. BUSH

The White House,

November 16, 2005.

NOTE: This message was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on November 17.

The President's News Conference With President Roh Moo-hyun of South Korea in Gyeongju, South Korea
November 17, 2005

President Roh. Good afternoon. I just had a very constructive and meaningful meeting with President Bush. Today's meeting is my fifth meeting with President Bush. The last time was 5 months ago, in June. Since this is his first visit to Korea during my administration, it gives me particular pleasure to welcome him to Korea, along with all the people of Korea.

At this meeting, we were able to reaffirm that the Korea-U.S. alliance, based on the common values of democracy and market economy, is strong and that it is developing into a comprehensive, dynamic, and mutually beneficial alliance. We also agreed that the Korea-U.S. alliance will continue to contribute to peace and stability in the region. Furthermore, we were able to reaffirm that most of the major issues related to our alliance are progressing smoothly and that the agreed points are being implemented faithfully.

For the remaining issues, we agreed that they would be resolved in close consultation with each other, to benefit both sides, based on mutual respect and the spirit of our alliance. President Bush and I agreed to launch a ministerial level strategic dialog to conduct indepth consultations on the future direction of our alliance and other far-ranging issues.

With regard to the North Korean nuclear issue, we reiterated that a nuclear-armed North Korea will not be tolerated and reaffirmed that the issue should be resolved through peaceful and diplomatic means. In order to implement the September 19th joint statement of the six-party talks, Korea and the U.S. agreed to work closely together. We especially felt that the second phase of the fifth round of six-party talks should be held as soon as possible in order to find a breakthrough in resolving the nuclear issue.

Furthermore, we had a sincere dialog about building a peace structure on the Korean Peninsula. Going beyond the resolution of the North Korean nuclear issue, we both felt that a strong peace structure must be in place in order not only to reduce tensions but also build permanent peace and trust in order to create a new future for the Korean Peninsula.

It gives me particular pleasure to be able to welcome President Bush to Gyeongju, the capital city of the Silla dynasty and the city more than 1,000 years old. I hope this will be an occasion for him to experience firsthand the beauty of Korea's fall weather and our beautiful culture. I also hope that Mr. and Mrs. Bush will come to better understand the history and culture of Korea. I hope you will have a wonderful visit. Thank you.

President Bush. Mr. President, thank you. Mr. President, thank you very much. You do have a beautiful country. And we've got a strong relationship. We've got a good

personal relationship, and our countries are bound together by common values and our deep desire for freedom and peace. Thank you very much for your hospitality. Really been looking forward to my second trip to your wonderful country.

I told the President during our discussions that I felt like the ties between our two countries has never been better. In a relationship like ours, there's obviously complexities. But the important thing is to work together to solve those complexities in a spirit of friendship. And secondly, I know how important our relationship is to help promote stability in this part of the world.

Yesterday I gave a speech in Kyoto where I, with all sincerity, praised the great progress of your country, Mr. President. You have shown how economic prosperity and political freedom go hand in hand for the good of the people. And as we helicoptered in from Busan today, it's very clear that the economic prosperity of this part of the world is very strong, and so is the political freedom.

We did have a wide-ranging discussion. We talked, of course, about the North Korean issue. We talked about the need to make sure that we continue to strategize through this—five of us who are working with North Korea to get North Korea to implement that which it said it would do, which is to verifiably get rid of its nuclear weapons and programs. It's in the world's interest that this happen. It's also in our interest that we continue to work together to solve the problem.

I see a peninsula one day that is united and at peace. And that's a vision, Mr. President, that I know you share as well. And that's a—it's the right vision. There's a real possibility that by working together, at some point in time, the peninsula will be united and at peace. And I want to appreciate that vision of yours, sir.

We also talked about our bilateral relations. Well, let me—first, I want to thank the President and the people of this wonderful country for sending more than 3,000 troops to Iraq to help that democracy flourish. And it's a—to me, it's not only a gesture of friendship, but it's a gesture of understanding that a democracy in the heart of the Middle East will help bring peace to others. And I thank you for your leadership, Mr. President, not only in—on the troops but as well as providing assistance to both Iraq and Afghanistan. We're bound by our love of freedom. And those commitments by your government indicate how close we are in terms of promoting the values of freedom and democracy.

I also want to thank you very much for your help for the victims of Hurricane Katrina. That meant a lot to our people. It was very generous of you, Mr. President, to do just that.

We talked about our working together on—make sure that the world is a world that trades freely and fairly, that—appreciate the President's leadership at the upcoming APEC summit, where I'm hopeful that all of us will join together in promoting a successful Doha round at the WTO with the understanding it's in our nations' interests that we have free and fair trade, but it's in the interests of developing nations that there be free and fair trade. The World Bank estimated that hundreds of millions of people will be lifted out of poverty if this round goes forward. And I know you share the same concern I share about poverty in the world, Mr. President.

At some point in time, I look forward to continuing our bilateral trade relations. At the appropriate time, our governments will come together and discuss how to further trade for the benefit of both countries.

Finally, Mr. President, I look forward to continuing to work with you to promote a foundation for peace and freedom, whether it be here on the peninsula or around this globe. And I know I've got a good partner in peace and freedom when I have discussions with you. So thanks for your hospitality. Really gracious of you to have—make time for a bilateral meeting

in the midst of all your planning for the APEC summit. And Laura and I are just thrilled to be here. Thank you.

President Roh. Next we will have a question-and-answer session. We will take four questions in all.

Inter-Korean Summit Meeting/South Korea-U.S. Relations

Q. First, I have a question to President Roh—actually, I have two questions. By holding early inter-Korean summit meeting, some people are saying that this would help to resolve the nuclear issue of North Korea. With regard to where and how the second Korean summit meeting, the government has said that it is not an issue as to where the meeting will be held. And I would like to ask your position on that. And second, through your summit meeting today, you have said that the Korea-U.S. alliance is very strong, indeed. But some people are seeing—since your administration took office, we are seeing cracks in the alliance. I would like to hear your opinion on this issue as well, please.

President Roh. Yes, thank you very much for that question. As for a second inter-Korean summit meeting, the Korean Government has always said that it is open to the possibility of a second inter-Korean summit meeting, and we wish to meet again with the leader of North Korea. But North Korea will probably have its own strategies. The North Korean nuclear issue has to be resolved, and I'm not sure whether North Korea thinks that it would be beneficial for them to meet with South Korea before or after the resolution of the North Korean nuclear issues. I think that this is probably something that North Korea will have to judge and decide. This is the status that we are at right now.

And in this situation, Korea—if we just look at the second inter-Korean summit meeting and the holding of that meeting, itself, as something that has a very important outcome, I really don't think that this will help North Korea's nuclear issue to be resolved. Of course, it's important that we meet, but what's more important is the content of the meeting, what we can agree upon and what we can resolve through an inter-Korean summit meeting. So I don't think that we should hold a summit meeting just for the sake of holding a summit meeting. We need to very sincerely consult this issue and think it over as to the content of the meeting.

And the second question was about the Korea-U.S. alliance, and I know that many people are saying many things about this alliance. I know that perspectives can differ according to the angle that they take. I'd like to ask you back a question, actually. Since the Korean war, Korea and the United States have held various talks, and we are currently in the process of handling many, many issues and resolving many issues. And I'd like to ask, when was a time where you had more issues solved and more issues discussed?

We're talking about realignment of the U.S. forces in Korea. We're talking about strategic flexibility. We're talking about deployment of Korean troops to Iraq. We're looking at the relocation of the Yongsan Garrison. Many issues are being dealt with now. These are very heavy items to be discussing in terms of my politics, and it is sometimes a political burden for us to be discussing these issues at one time. But we are happy doing this for the past 2 or so years, and most of these issues have been resolved very well.

I'd like to ask you to think about the past administrations and think about this administration in comparison with them. We are in very smooth and open communication with the United States. And for inter-Korean relations as well, this is probably the most stable situation between the two Koreas that you have ever seen. And the Korea-U.S. dialog is going on very smoothly, and we are reaching very high-level agreements as well. And this is an interactive dialog that we are having. It's a two-way dialog where we engage in dialog

very seriously and voice all of our opinions and discuss them. And I think that this is an area where we are having these open communications between Korea and the United States, and we are able to confirm this open communication in our meeting as well.

And the Korea-U.S. alliance is in a very good state, and I do believe that it will continue to become even better. And I think that our frank discussions between President Bush and myself and also among our officials as well will leave foundation for even stronger ties between Korea and the United States and the Korea-U.S. alliance to grow even further.

Next we'd like to have a United States journalist ask a question to President Bush. Please go ahead with your question.

War in Iraq/Capitol Hill Politics

Q. Mr. President, Vice President Cheney called it reprehensible for critics to question how you took the country to war, but Senator Hagel says it's patriotic to ask those kinds of questions. Who do you think is right?

President Bush. The Vice President.

Q. Why?

President Bush. Well, look, ours is a country where people ought to be able to disagree, and I expect there to be criticism. But when Democrats say that I deliberately misled the Congress and the people, that's irresponsible. They looked at the same intelligence I did, and they voted—many of them voted to support the decision I made. It's irresponsible to use politics. This is serious business making—winning this war. But it's irresponsible to do what they've done. So I agree with the Vice President.

Q. [*Inaudible*]

President Bush. I think people ought to be allowed to ask questions. It is irresponsible to say that I deliberately misled the American people when it came to the very same intelligence they looked at and came to the—many of them came to the same conclusion I did. Listen, I—patriotic as heck to disagree with the President. It doesn't bother me. What bothers me is when people are irresponsibly using their positions and playing politics, and that's exactly what is taking place in America.

President Roh. We'd like to take another question for President Bush, please. Another question for President Bush from a U.S. journalist, please.

President Bush. Your name is not——

North Korean Nuclear Program/Aid

Q. Oh, I'm sorry.

President Bush. You can go ahead and grab the mike if you want to. [*Laughter*] But I didn't know you were called Caren [Caren Bohan, Reuters].

Q. I didn't hear a name.

President Bush. That's fine.

Q. Thank you, sir. The North Koreans have said they don't believe the agreement they signed in September binds them to give up nuclear weapons before they get any assistance.

President Bush. Before getting assistance—yes.

Q. Yes. Are you willing to give them assistance first?

And President Roh, your country gives a lot of assistance to North Korea already. Does that put your approach at odds with the approach of the U.S.?

President Bush. The issue really is the light-water reactor. Our position is, is that we'll consider the light-water reactor at the appropriate time. The appropriate time is after they have verifiably given up their nuclear weapons and/or programs.

President Roh. Next, from KBS. Please ask your question.

North Korean Human Rights/Six-Party Talks

Q. I have two questions to President Roh. First, with regard to human rights in North Korea, I do understand that the third committee of the United Nations will be putting the resolution on the North Korean human rights to vote. I would like

to ask about reports that there are differences in opinions between you and President Bush with regard to North Korean human rights issues. I'd like to ask what was the discussion between you in tonight's—in today's meeting. And I'd also like to ask President Roh about our principles on voting in the United Nations on this resolution.

And second, in the last meeting between you and President Bush, President Bush mentioned Mr. Kim Chong-il, and it was also—some analysts also said that that summit meeting between you and President Bush helped the discussions in the six-party talks. This summit meeting between you and President Bush is being held in the recess period of the fifth six-party talks. I'd like to ask if you think that this summit meeting today—do you have any message to the six-party talks and North Korea?

President Roh. I see that the U.S. journalists are just asking one question to President Bush, but we're taking two questions from our journalists right now.

With regard to the human rights issue in North Korea—now, human rights is a universal value of humankind. It's something that is very valuable. And Korea has a very proactive position when it comes to human rights issues in the world. But between the two Koreas, we have very many important issues that we have to solve politically, and we always have to take into consideration the status of the relationship between the two Koreas. And that is what I have to say about the North Korean nuclear—the North Korean human rights issue.

And I do believe that during President Lincoln's term in office, people were always talking about the slavery, and President Lincoln was always attacked about not doing anything for slavery, to release the slaves. And I do understand that President Lincoln was quite slow in liberating the slaves in the United States. And this was because the President, if he took the lead in this issue, he thought that the—America would be divided in opinion, and this would be very serious. And in reality, the Civil War did take place. And because of this issue of slaves, there was a situation where the United States was in jeopardy, and because of that, he had to go through a process to ensure that the country would stay together. President Lincoln's first priority was unity among the States of America, and in this large framework of unity, he pursued his policy to free the slaves in the United States. As a result, before the end of the Civil War in the United States, I do understand that President Lincoln was able to free all the slaves in America, and they were actually—and many people went into the army, many of the slaves, former slaves went into the army and fought for President Lincoln.

And this evaluation of President Lincoln's policies was carried out actually 11 years after President Lincoln's death by a scholar who was looking into the situation of the slaves in the United States. I think that this is quite similar to the position that we are taking when it comes to North Korean human rights issues.

And your second question—what was it again, please, after human rights?

Q. [*Inaudible*]

President Roh. As for the North Korean nuclear issue, President Bush and I engaged in a lengthy discussion on that issue. And the contents of the discussion were basically that we agreed on the fundamental principles when it came to the North Korean nuclear issue. And in the process of the six-party talks, how North Korea would act, the tactics of North Korea when it came to the details, we had some ideas to exchange, and because of that, the discussion of the North Korean nuclear issue was quite lengthy.

But I must say that we do not have any differing opinions on this. We are basically looking to resolve this North Korean nuclear issue, and we are exploring for ways that we can resolve this issue. We have no disagreement at all that this issue must

be resolved. And in understanding the attitude of North Korea, I do believe that we were able to share a recognition on North Korea's attitude in this whole process.

And with regard to this issue, the authorities of both sides, Korea and the United States, must work closely in cooperation and consult with each other. And we agreed that we need to have—share an agreement if we want the whole process to succeed. And overall, this North Korean nuclear issue should be resolved peacefully within the framework of the six-party talks. And we were quite optimistic that it would be able to be resolved in the framework of the six-party talks.

If I just add one more point, the six-party talks, yes, definitely it is a difficult task to accomplish. But the United States, when it looks at Northeast Asia, the Korean Peninsula, the North Korean nuclear issue, it has many policies. But I do believe that these policies are some of the United States most successful policies, indeed.

And here in Korea as well, the inter-Korean relations are very stable indeed. And in the process of resolving this North Korean nuclear issue, once again I do believe that we are in close cooperation with the United States, and we have this framework of the six-party talks. And this is a framework that includes all the members of the Northeast Asian community, and we are responding to the North Korean nuclear issue together. So I think that we are holding dialog on a very stable foundation.

Of course, North Korea is not someone that we can very easily engage in discussion and dialog with. North Korea probably has its own very complex attitudes and positions, but this has always been the case with North Korea. And in our process of engaging in dialog with North Korea, I think that we have the most strategic and solid foundation of dialog that we have ever had. Therefore, once again, when it comes to the United States Northeast Asia policies, I think that they are in a very good direction indeed. And that was what I did mention during our talks. And when I first met with President Bush, I asked him to also listen to opinions that things were going well in Northeast Asia, that things would go well in Northeast Asia as well.

Thank you very much. And this concludes today's joint press conference.

NOTE: The President's news conference began at 12:15 p.m. at the Hotel Hyundai. President Roh referred to Chairman Kim Chong-il of North Korea. President Roh and some reporters spoke in Korean, and their remarks were translated by an interpreter.

Joint Declaration on the ROK-U.S. Alliance and Peace on the Korean Peninsula

November 17, 2005

President Roh Moo-hyun of the Republic of Korea (ROK) and President George W. Bush of the United States of America held a summit meeting on November 17, 2005, in Gyeongju.

President Bush expressed his deep appreciation for Korea's natural beauty and ancient culture which he was able to experience together with President Roh at Gyeongju.

The two leaders had an in-depth discussion on a wide range of issues: the alliance, the North Korean nuclear issue, inter-Korean relations and establishing a peace regime on the Korean Peninsula, economic cooperation, and cooperation in regional and global issues.

Reaffirming that the alliance is strong, the two leaders concurred that the resolution of the North Korean nuclear issue is essential for establishing durable peace on the Korean peninsula.

President Roh and President Bush highlighted the contribution of the alliance to securing peace and stability on the Korean Peninsula and in Northeast Asia for the past fifty years.

The two leaders expressed their satisfaction with the steady development of the ROK-U.S. relationship into a comprehensive, dynamic and mutually-beneficial alliance relationship, as agreed upon during the May 14, 2003, summit in Washington D.C.

The two leaders reviewed the successful force realignment agreements and shared the view that this realignment will further enhance the combined defense capability of the alliance. They expressed the common understanding that U.S. Forces-Korea (USFK) is essential for the peace and stability of the Peninsula and Northeast Asia.

The two leaders agreed that the alliance not only stands against threats but also for the promotion of the common values of democracy, market economy, freedom, and human rights in Asia and around the world.

President Roh and President Bush spoke highly of the successful agreements on the relocation of USFK bases including Yongsan Garrison, and the partial reduction of USFK, which was accomplished through close ROK-U.S. consultation. Both leaders expressed satisfaction that the agreements between the two sides were being faithfully implemented.

President Bush expressed appreciation for the assistance that Korean troops are giving to a swifter establishment of peace and reconstruction in Iraq and Afghanistan and also for the contribution the Korean government has made towards strengthening the ROK-U.S. alliance through such efforts.

President Roh and President Bush agreed to launch a strategic dialogue called Strategic Consultation for Allied Partnership (SCAP) at the ministerial-level to consult on bilateral, regional and global issues of mutual interest. The two leaders agreed to have the first strategic dialogue at the beginning of 2006.

President Roh and President Bush reiterated that a nuclear-armed North Korea will not be tolerated, and reaffirmed the principles that the North Korean nuclear issue should be resolved through peaceful and diplomatic means and that North Korea should eliminate its nuclear weapons programs promptly and verifiably.

The two leaders welcomed the September 19 Joint Statement concluded during the fourth round of the Six-Party Talks as an important step towards the goal of a denuclearized North Korea.

They welcomed North Korea's commitment to abandon all nuclear weapons and existing nuclear programs and reaffirmed their commitment to take measures outlined in the Joint Statement.

The two leaders looked forward to progress in the fifth round of talks, which should be dedicated to the implementation of the Joint Statement.

President Roh reaffirmed that the ROK will continue to pursue the development of inter-Korean relations in accordance with its Peace and Prosperity Policy and in harmony with progress in resolving the nuclear issue so that both are mutually reinforcing. President Bush expressed support for South-North reconciliation and pledged to continue close cooperation and coordination as it develops.

The two leaders shared a common understanding that the process of resolving the North Korean nuclear issue will provide an important basis to build a durable peace regime on the Korean Peninsula.

The two leaders agreed that reducing the military threat on the Korean Peninsula and moving from the current armistice mechanism to a peace mechanism would contribute to full reconciliation and peaceful reunification on the Korean Peninsula.

Pursuant to the September 19th Six Party Joint Statement, the two leaders agreed that discussions on a peace regime should take place amongst directly-related parties in a forum separate from the Six-Party Talks and following progress in those Talks, and expected that the discussions on a peace regime and the Six Party Talks will be mutually reinforcing.

They agreed that these peace discussions should lead to a decreased military threat and increased confidence on the peninsula in a manner consistent with the peaceful intentions of the U.S.-ROK alliance.

The two leaders exchanged views on the situation for the people of the North and, based on a common hope for a better future, agreed to continue seeking ways to improve their condition.

The two leaders agreed to strengthen ROK-U.S. cooperation so that APEC, as a major economic forum encompassing the Asia-Pacific, can respond more effectively to important demands from the region in the future.

President Roh and President Bush agreed to closely cooperate with each other with a view to ensuring the success of the forthcoming 6th WTO Ministerial conference and the final conclusion of the WTO Doha development agenda negotiations.

The two presidents recognized that close economic ties are an important pillar of the bilateral relationship and agreed that deepening and strengthening our economic and trade cooperation will contribute to the prosperity and freedom of both nations.

President Bush announced that the U.S. will work with the ROK to develop a visa waiver program roadmap to assist Korea in meeting the requirements for membership in the program. Korea's interest in participating in the VWP reflects our strong bilateral partnership and will contribute to enhance exchanges and mutual understanding.

President Roh and President Bush agreed to make common efforts to develop a regional multilateral security dialogue and a cooperation mechanism, so as to jointly respond to regional security issues. In this regard, both leaders noted that the participants in the Six-Party Talks agreed through the Joint Statement to look for ways and means to promote security cooperation in Northeast Asia and that there was a common understanding among the participants that the Six-Party Talks could develop into such a regional multilateral security consultative mechanism once the North Korean nuclear issue is resolved.

The two leaders also agreed to continuously strengthen bilateral cooperation in the United Nations and other international organizations, including through such activities as peace-keeping operations.

The two leaders agreed to continue to cooperate in fighting the global war on terror, and dealing with various international security issues including transnational crimes.

The two leaders agreed to cooperate in arms reduction and efforts to prevent the proliferation of WMD and their means of delivery at a regional and global level.

President Roh and President Bush agreed to continue to work together towards a full partnership between allies.

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

Joint Vision Statement on the ASEAN-U.S. Enhanced Partnership
November 17, 2005

Recalling that the significant progress made in the relations between the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and the United States since 1977 has contributed to the deepening of ties in all fields of cooperation, and such has been nurtured through the annual ASEAN Post Ministerial Conference, the ASEAN-U.S. Dialogue at senior officials' level, and other fora;

Further recalling the meeting between Leaders of ASEAN Member Countries which are members of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) and the President of the United States during the APEC Economic Leaders' Meeting at Los Cabos, Mexico on 26 October 2002, and the announcement by the United States that year of the Enterprise for ASEAN Initiative (EAI) and the ASEAN Cooperation Plan (ACP) which have contributed to growing cooperation between ASEAN and the United States in numerous areas of interest;

Welcoming the continuing progress in ASEAN-U.S. Dialogue Relations recently, particularly following the meeting between the ASEAN Foreign Ministers and the Secretary of State of the United States in New York on 12 September 2005;

Sharing a common desire to live with one another and with the world at large in a just, democratic, and harmonious environment, and in this context, recognizing that equitable, democratic, and caring societies are the foundation for durable peace, stability, and shared prosperity;

Expressing the need to work closely to help alleviate poverty and address development gaps in ASEAN, through sustained economic growth and enhanced economic interaction and links between ASEAN and the United States, and joint efforts in nurturing human, cultural, and natural resources for sustainable development, and to further build on the existing friendship, goodwill, understanding, and people-to-people linkages between ASEAN and the United States;

Reaffirming support for the principles and purposes of the Charter of the United Nations (UN) and other universally recognized principles of international law;

Expressing a common interest in the development of ASEAN as a regional institution that will effectively contribute to peace, prosperity, and stability in Southeast Asia and the world, and recognizing the important contribution of the United States to maintaining peace and stability and to promoting prosperity;

Sharing a great interest in the success of ASEAN's efforts in pursuing comprehensive integration towards the realization of an open and outward-looking, dynamic and resilient ASEAN Community by 2020 and a Southeast Asia bonded together in partnership as a community of caring societies, as envisioned in the Declaration of ASEAN Concord II;

Expressing desire to further increase cooperation and friendship between ASEAN and the United States to seize the opportunities and meet the challenges of an increasingly interdependent world.

ASEAN and the United States hereby:

1. Agree to launch an ASEAN-United States Enhanced Partnership that is comprehensive, action-oriented, and forward-looking, and comprising political and security cooperation, economic cooperation, and social and development cooperation including, but not limited to, the following elements:

Political and Security Cooperation

2. Support the integration of ASEAN, leading to an ASEAN Community through,

inter alia, the implementation of the Vientiane Action Programme (VAP) and appropriate successor plans;

3. Acknowledge that the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia (TAC) acts as a code of conduct governing inter-State relations in the region for the promotion of peace and stability, and its role as a unifying concept for ASEAN, and respect the spirit and principles of the TAC, in line with the commitment of ASEAN and the United States to enhance their partnership;

4. Support the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) as the premier regional political and security forum in the Asia-Pacific region with ASEAN as the driving force;

5. Recognize the importance of non-proliferation in all aspects of nuclear weapons in Southeast Asia;

6. Promote closer cooperation on combating transnational crimes, including inter alia, terrorism, proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, illicit drug trafficking, trafficking in persons, and enhancing maritime and border security, and express readiness to build on the ASEAN-United States Joint Declaration for Cooperation to Combat International Terrorism signed in Bandar Seri Begawan in 2002 to develop joint activities;

7. Cooperate in multilateral frameworks, including the UN, the World Trade Organization (WTO), and the APEC, emphasize the importance of ambitious outcomes in the Doha Round that would bring tangible benefits to all, support the early accession of Laos and Viet Nam to the WTO, and consider the admission of ASEAN Member Countries that are not members of APEC into that forum;

Economic Cooperation

8. Strengthen economic cooperation by, inter alia, continuing to implement the EAI, which serves as a mechanism to enhance trade and investment flows between ASEAN and the United States, and in this regard, agree to work together to conclude a region-wide ASEAN-United States Trade and Investment Framework Agreement (TIFA);

9. Further enhance economic linkages, which will assist in sustaining economic growth in ASEAN and the U.S., and cooperate jointly in support of ASEAN's realization of an ASEAN Economic Community by 2020, if not earlier;

10. Enhance economic cooperation in areas to be mutually agreed upon between ASEAN and the U.S., including but not limited to trade and investment facilitation; and undertake missions and measures to strengthen the investment climate in ASEAN thereby encouraging U.S. investment into the region;

11. Collaborate to reform and strengthen international financial institutions in the areas of economic surveillance through the sharing of macroeconomic and financial information where disclosure of information is permitted by domestic laws and regulations of the respective countries, and agree to work more closely in international financial institutions to promote the influence of Asia to a level more commensurate with its economic weight;

12. Promote greater interaction between their respective private sectors, recognizing the pivotal role of the business community;

13. Pursue the development and deployment of cleaner, more efficient energy technologies of all kinds, including renewable and other low-emitting sources of energy, enhance ASEAN's regional energy infrastructure, promote energy security, promote the protection of the environment and the sustainability of natural resources, recognizing that economic growth is a necessary condition for deploying the cleaner technologies needed for continued environmental improvement, and pledge further collaboration in all modes of transport, including air maritime and multimodal transport to facilitate the movement of peoples and goods;

Social and Development Cooperation

14. Collaborate in the implementation of the Vientiane Action Programme (VAP) and its successor programmes or plans so that ASEAN may accelerate its regional integration, recognizing the importance of the Initiative for ASEAN Integration (IAI) and other sub-regional growth areas which would bridge the development gaps within ASEAN, and stress the importance of cooperation to promote sustainable development;

15. Cooperate at the regional and global levels on disaster management, including the development of regional and global standby arrangements for disaster management and emergency response, and in this connection, welcome the ASEAN Standby Arrangements for Disaster Relief and Emergency Response;

16. Resolve to work together to prevent the spread and reduce the harm of HIV/AIDs, SARS, other infectious diseases and, on an urgent basis, develop mechanisms for cooperation to contain outbreaks of avian influenza as well as pledge cooperation to put in place systems and procedures to control infectious diseases including animal diseases;

17. Foster and deepen cooperation in science and technology, and information and communications technology and encourage people-to-people interactions and exchanges as well as inter-faith dialogues, and promote cooperation through networking activities and capacity building in education such as student exchange, fellowship programme, academic attachment and research collaboration, as well as promotion of ASEAN studies in the U.S. and U.S. studies in ASEAN Member Countries;

18. Welcome the intention of the U.S. to foster educational exchanges and the continuing efforts of the U.S. to strengthen its engagement with the ASEAN Secretariat and support the capacity building of the Secretariat;

Follow-Up

19. Call on the ASEAN Foreign Ministers and the U.S. Secretary of State, with the assistance of the senior officials, to develop a Plan of Action to implement the ASEAN-United States Enhanced Partnership;

20. Call on the ASEAN Economic Ministers (AEM) and the United States Trade Representative (USTR) to meet and contribute to the implementation of the ASEAN-U.S. Enhanced Partnership and its Plan of Action.

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

Remarks Prior to Discussions With President Vladimir Putin of Russia in Busan, South Korea

November 18, 2005

President Putin. Distinguished Mr. President, allow me to cordially welcome you and your colleagues. And I get impression that with some of your colleagues, I never said goodbye. [*Laughter*] And it is very pleasant indeed, that with these colleagues, we virtually had permanent contacts on almost all bilateral and international issues.

And I'm especially pleased to have this meeting with you here in South Korea. You stayed here for quite a while, and probably you will tell me of your impressions.

President Bush. That's right. Thank you.

Well, thanks, Vladimir, for hosting this meeting. I always enjoy a chance to have a good discussion with you. You're right;

we've got a very important relationship. We value your advice, and we value the strategic relationship we've built. So thanks—thanks again for hosting this.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:16 p.m. at the Busan Marriott. President Putin spoke in Russian, and his remarks were translated by an interpreter.

Statement on House of Representatives Passage of Legislation To Reduce Federal Spending
November 18, 2005

I applaud the Republican Members of the House who passed a significant savings package that will restrain spending and keep us on track to cut the deficit in half by 2009. We will continue to fund our priorities in a fiscally responsible way and ensure that taxpayer money is spent wisely or not spent at all. I urge the House and Senate to reach agreement promptly on a spending-reduction package that I can sign into law this year.

Remarks to United States Troops at Osan, South Korea
November 19, 2005

Thank you all. Thank you all very much. Please be seated—unless you don't have a seat. [*Laughter*] Laura and I are so honored to be here. We thought we'd stop by and feel the thunder and the fury of the Mustangs. Thanks for greeting us. It's a privilege to stand with the brave men and women of the 51st Fighter Wing and the 7th Air Force. Our citizens are safer because you're ready to fight tonight. You're serving the cause of liberty on distant frontiers, and I bring a message from home: Your Commander in Chief is proud of you, and so is the American people.

For half a century, American service men and women have stood faithful and vigilant watch here in Korea. You've kept the peace, and you secured the freedom won at great cost in the Korean war. You've ensured that no American life was lost in vain. In five decades, since Task Force Smith first landed at Pusan, the world has watched America's steadfast and unwavering commitment to freedom.

Three years of war made America and Korea enduring allies in the struggle for liberty. And five decades of sacrifice by the men and women of our Armed Forces secured peace and democracy on this peninsula. And the world is better off for it. Your courage has brought stability to the region, freedom to millions, and honor to the uniform. Our Nation is grateful for your service—your service for freedom and peace.

The Republic of Korea is now a beacon of liberty that shines across the most heavily armed border in the world. It is a light reaching to a land shrouded in darkness. Together the United States and the Republic of Korea have shown that the future belongs to freedom, and one day, all Koreans will enjoy the blessings of freedom.

I'm proud to be traveling with the First Lady, Laura Bush, and the Secretary of State, Condoleezza Rice.. I thank General LaPorte and his wife, Judy. I want to thank

General Trexler and his wife, Kathie; General Campbell; General Joe Reynes and his wife, Karen; Command Sergeant Major Barry Wheeler; Command—Chief Master Sergeant Vance Clarke; Chief Master Sergeant Richard Jette. Thank you all for being here.

I'm pleased to see the military families here. I thank you from the bottom of my heart for your sacrifice in the cause of freedom. Our military families stand strong, and America appreciates you very much.

I visited Osan before, and I notice you've got an impressive runway here, a lot of room for any pilot, so as Air Force One was approaching, I told our pilot, "No excuses, you better spike it at Osan." [*Laughter*] And he did. This air base and runway were earned by the determination and the grit of the United States military and a brave coalition of the willing. Not far from here, during the Korean war, Captain Lewis L. Millett took Hill 180. Faced with superior numbers, Captain Millett repelled Communist forces by leading the first bayonet charge by a U.S. Army company since World War I. For his valor, he was awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor.

As part of the 30,000 active duty personnel in Korea, you're upholding the same proud tradition. You know what it takes to win a war; you know how to protect the peace; and you know what it takes to defend our Nation.

To defend our country and to defend freedom, we've got more work ahead. For decades, America's Armed Forces abroad have essentially remained where the wars of the last century ended in Europe and in Asia. So more than 3 years ago, we launched a comprehensive review of America's global force posture, the numbers and types and locations and capability of our forces around the world.

We're transforming our military. Over the coming decade, we'll take advantage of 21st century military technologies so we can deploy rapidly with increased combat power. This will help improve the lives of our military and their families, because more of our troops will be stationed and deployed for home. And this will help us meet the threats of the 21st century. By transforming our military, we'll more be able to do our duty to protect the American people.

As South Korea has grown more free and prosperous, it's built an increasingly capable military that is now ready to assume a larger role in defending its people. By assuming some responsibilities that have traditionally been shouldered by American forces, South Korea will strengthen the deterrent on the Korean Peninsula and free up some of our combat forces to help us win the war on terror.

And that war began on September the 11th, 2001. On that morning, Americans saw the violence and hatred of a new enemy. We saw the terrorists' destructive vision for us and for all who love freedom. And in the face of this threat, our Nation has made a clear choice: We'll confront this mortal danger; we will stay on the offensive; we will not wait to be attacked again; we will not rest or tire until the war on terror is won.

For more than 4 years, we've seen the brutal nature of the enemy. They've targeted the innocent in scores of countries, from almost every walk of life. In Casablanca, they killed diners enjoying their evening meal. In Bali, they killed tourists on a holiday. In Beslan, they killed Russian schoolchildren. They've murdered workers in Riyadh and commuters in Madrid and hotel guests in Jakarta and guests at a wedding celebration in Amman, Jordan. They kill Iraqi children. The tragic images of innocent victims can make it seem like these terrorist attacks are random, isolated acts of madness. While these killers choose their victims indiscriminately, their attacks flow from an ideology and a terrifying vision for the world. Their acts are evil, but they're not insane.

Some call this evil Islamic radicalism, others, militant jihadism, still others,

Islamo-fascism. Whatever we choose to call this enemy, we must recognize that this ideology is very different from the tenets of the great religion of Islam. This form of radicalism exploits Islam to serve a violent, political vision: The establishment by terrorism, subversion, and insurgency of a totalitarian empire that denies all political and religious freedom.

We know the vision of the radicals because they openly state it in videos and audiotapes and letters and declarations and web sites. These extremists want to end American and Western influence in the broader Middle East because we stand for democracy and peace and stand in the way of their ambitions. The tactics of Al Qaida and other Islamic extremists has been consistent for a quarter century. They hit us, and they expect us to run.

Recently, the world learned of a letter written by Al Qaida number-two leader, a man named Zawahiri. He wrote this letter to his chief deputy in Iraq, the terrorist Zarqawi. In it, Zawahiri points to the Vietnam war as a model for Al Qaida. He writes, quote, "The aftermath of the collapse of American power in Vietnam and how they ran and left their agents is noteworthy," end quote. The terrorists witnessed our response after the attacks of American—on American troops in Beirut in 1983 and Mogadishu in 1993. They concluded that America can be made to run again, only this time on a larger scale with greater consequences. The terrorists are mistaken; America will never run. We will stand and fight, and we will win the war on terror.

The terrorists state their plans. They want to use the vacuum that would be created by an American retreat to gain control of a country, to build a base from which to launch attacks on America, and to conduct their war against nonradical Muslim governments.

Over the past few decades, radicals have specifically targeted Egypt and Saudi Arabia and Pakistan and Jordan for potential takeovers. And for a time, they achieved their goal in Afghanistan, until they came face to face with the men and women of the United States military.

In Afghanistan, we put the terrorists on the run, and now they've set their sights on another country. They're trying to turn Iraq into what Afghanistan was under the Taliban, a terrorist sanctuary from which they can plan and launch attacks against our people. The terrorists regard Iraq as the central front in their war against humanity. And we must recognize Iraq as the central front in our war against the terrorists.

These militants believe that controlling one country will rally the Muslim masses, enabling them to overthrow moderate governments in the region and establish a radical Islamic empire that reaches from Spain to Indonesia. If they're not stopped, the terrorists will be able to advance their agenda to develop weapons of mass destruction, to destroy Israel, to intimidate Europe, and to break our will and blackmail our Government into isolation. I'm going to make you this commitment: This is not going to happen on my watch.

Some might be tempted to dismiss the terrorist goals as fanatical or extreme. They are fanatical and extreme, but we cannot afford to dismiss them. Evil men obsessed with ambition and unburdened by conscience must be taken very seriously. Against such an enemy, there's only one effective response: We will never back down, and we will never give in, and we'll never accept anything less than complete victory.

We didn't ask for this global struggle, but we're answering history's call with a comprehensive strategy to win this war on terror. First, we're determined to prevent attacks by terrorist networks by protecting the homeland and working with our allies to destroy the terrorist networks and incapacitate their leaders.

Together with our coalition partners, we've disrupted a number of serious Al

Qaida terrorist plots since September the 11th, including several Al Qaida plots to attack inside the United States. Our coalition against terrorists killed or captured nearly all those directly responsible for the September the 11th attacks. We've captured or killed several of bin Laden's most senior deputies and Al Qaida managers and operatives in numerous countries. And we will stay on the hunt. We will not relent until the terror networks that threaten us are exposed and broken and their leaders are held to account for their murder.

Second, we're determined to deny weapons of mass destruction to outlaw regimes and to their terrorist allies who would use them without hesitation. Working with Great Britain and Pakistan and other nations, we exposed and disrupted a major black-market operation in nuclear technology led by A.Q. Khan. Libya has abandoned its chemical and nuclear weapons programs as well as its long-range ballistic missiles. And last year, America and our partners in the Proliferation Security Initiative have stopped more than a dozen shipments of suspect weapons technology, including equipment for Iran's ballistic missile program. So long as I'm your President, we'll continue to deny the world's most dangerous men the world's most dangerous weapons.

Third, we are determined to deny radical groups the support and sanctuary of outlaw regimes. So I've laid out a clear doctrine: The United States makes no distinction between those who commit acts of terror and those who support and harbor the terrorists, because they're equally guilty of murder. Any government that chooses to be an ally of terror has also chosen to be an enemy of civilization, and the civilized world will hold those regimes to account.

Fourth, we're determined to deny the militants control of any nation which they would use as a home base and a launching pad for terror. This mission has brought new and urgent responsibilities to all who wear the uniform. American troops are fighting beside our Afghan partners against remnants of the Taliban and their Al Qaida allies. And American troops are fighting alongside courageous Iraqis against the remnants of a regime and a network of terrorists who want to stop the advance of a free Iraq. Our goal is to defeat the terrorists and allies—and their allies at the heart of their power. And so we will defeat the enemy in Iraq.

As we pursue the terrorists, our military is helping to train Iraqi security forces so they can defend their people and so they can fight the enemy. And we're making steady progress. With every passing month, more and more Iraqi forces are standing up and the Iraqi military is gaining new capabilities and new confidence. At the time of our Fallujah operations a year ago, there were only a few Iraqi army battalions in combat. Today, there are more than 90 Iraqi army battalions fighting the terrorists along with our forces. American and Iraqi troops are conducting major assaults to clear out enemy fighters in Baghdad and other parts of Iraq. Iraqi police and security forces are helping clear the terrorists from their strongholds. They're holding onto areas we've cleared and are preventing the enemy from returning.

Our strategy can be summed up this way: As Iraqis stand up, we will stand down. And when our commanders on the ground tell me that Iraqi forces can defend their freedom, our troops will come home with the honor they have earned.

The second part of our strategy is a political strategy. Iraqis are moving forward in building a democracy. A month ago, millions of Iraqis turned out to vote for a constitution that guarantees fundamental freedoms and lays the foundation for lasting democracy. In a few weeks, Iraqis will vote again to choose a fully constitutional government to lead them for the next 4 years. Iraq is making amazing progress from the days of being under the thumb of a brutal dictator. Think about this: In 2½ years, they've gone from tyranny to an election

for a transitional government to the ratification of a constitution to the election of a free government. The Iraqi people are proving their determination to build a future founded on democracy and hope, and the United States of America will help them succeed.

The fifth element of our strategy in the war on terror is to deny the militants future recruits by replacing hatred and resentment with democracy and hope across the broader Middle East. If the Middle East is left to grow in bitterness, if countries remain in misery while radicals stir the resentments of millions, then that part of the world will be a source of endless conflict and mounting danger. If the peoples of that region are permitted to choose their own destiny and advance by their own energy and participation as both free men and women, then the extremists will be marginalized and the flow of violent radicalism to the rest of the world will slow and eventually end. History has proven that free nations are peaceful nations and that democracies do not fight their neighbors. By advancing the hope of freedom and democracy for others, we'll make our own freedom more secure.

Our men and women in uniform who are serving on the Korean Peninsula have seen freedom succeed in Asia. By promoting freedom in Japan, we helped transform an enemy into a democracy that is one of the world's most prosperous nations and one of America's most trusted allies. By standing firm against a determined enemy, we helped provide the people of South Korea with the peace and stability they needed to transform their economy and claim their own freedom. And by helping the people of Asia build successful and thriving democracies, we have helped set a hopeful example for the world. In the 21st century, we go forward with confidence because we know that freedom is the destiny of every man, woman, and child on this Earth.

Our work for peace and freedom involves great sacrifice by our troops. We see this sacrifice in Iraq, where our troops are hunting down the terrorists, and we're helping the Iraqi people build a working democracy. In Washington, there are some who say that the sacrifice is too great, and they urge us to set a date for withdrawal before we have completed our mission. Those who are in the fight know better. One of our top commanders in Iraq, Major General William Webster, says that setting a deadline for our withdrawal from Iraq would be, quote, "a recipe for disaster." General Webster is right. So long as I'm the Commander in Chief, our strategy in Iraq will be driven by the sober judgment of our military commanders on the ground. We will fight the terrorists in Iraq. We will stay in the fight until we have achieved the brave—the victory that our brave troops have fought for.

In this time of war and sacrifice, the greatest burden falls on our military families. We've lost some of our Nation's finest men and women in the war on terror. Each of these men and women left grieving families and loved ones back home. Each loss of life is heartbreaking. And the best way to honor the sacrifices of our fallen troops is to complete their mission and lay the foundation of peace for our children and our grandchildren.

With the rise of a deadly enemy and the unfolding of a global ideological struggle, our time in history will be remembered for new challenges and unprecedented dangers. And yet this fight we have joined is also the current expression of an ancient struggle between those who put their faith in dictators and those who put their faith in the people. Throughout history, tyrants and would-be tyrants have always claimed that murder is justified to serve their grand vision, and they end up alienating decent people across the globe. Tyrants and would-be tyrants have always claimed that regimented societies are strong and pure, until those societies collapse in corruption and

decay. Tyrants and would-be tyrants have always claimed that free men and women are weak and decadent, until the day that free men and women defeat them.

We don't know the course our own struggle will take or the sacrifices that might lie ahead. We do know, however, that the defense of freedom is worth our sacrifice. We know that the love of freedom is the mightiest force of history. And we do know the cause of freedom will once again prevail.

May God bless you all. Thank you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 4:29 p.m. at Osan Air Base. In his remarks, he referred to Gen. Leon J. LaPorte, USA, commander, United Nations Command, ROK/US Combined Forces Command, and U.S. Forces Korea, and his wife, Judy; Lt. Gen. Garry R. Trexler, USAF, deputy commander, United Nations Command and U.S. Forces Korea, and commander, Air Component Command, Republic of Korea, and 7th Air Force, and his wife, Kathie; Lt. Gen. Charles C. Campbell, USA, commanding general, 8th U.S. Army, and chief of staff, United Nations Command, ROK/US Combined Forces Command, and U.S. Forces Korea; Brig. Gen. Joseph Reynes, Jr., USAF, commander, 51st Fighter Wing, and his wife, Karen; CSM Barry C. Wheeler, USA, command sergeant major, United Nations Command, ROK/US Combined Forces Command, U.S. Forces Korea, and 8th United States Army; CMSgt. Vance M. Clarke, USAF, command chief master sergeant, 7th Air Force Command; CMSgt. Richard E. Jette, USAF, command chief master sergeant, 51st Fighter Wing; Ayman Al-Zawahiri, founder of the Egyptian Islamic Jihad and senior Al Qaida associate; senior Al Qaida associate Abu Musab Al Zarqawi; Usama bin Laden, leader of the Al Qaida terrorist organization; A.Q. Khan, former head of Pakistan's nuclear weapons program; former President Saddam Hussein of Iraq; and Maj. Gen. William G. Webster, Jr., USA, commander, Multinational Division Baghdad and Task Force Baghdad.

The President's Radio Address
November 19, 2005

Good morning. I am currently traveling in Asia on a trip to Japan, South Korea, China, and Mongolia. I'm visiting with friends and allies in the region to discuss issues vital to the future of all Americans.

One important issue for American workers, entrepreneurs, businesses, and farmers is to access foreign markets for our goods, services, and farm products. At the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation meeting in South Korea, we have advanced America's case for free and fair trade.

The leaders of the 20 other Asian-Pacific member economies join the United States in a strong statement aimed at moving forward the Doha round of negotiations at the World Trade Organization. By pushing for a successful conclusion to the trade talks, Asian-Pacific leaders are working with us toward the goal of a freer and fairer global trading system, which will benefit America and other nations around the world.

I'm also raising the issue of free and fair trade and open markets in my one-on-one meetings with other leaders. In my discussions with Prime Minister Koizumi of Japan, I urged him to lift his nation's ban on American beef. The Prime Minister assured me that we are making good progress on this issue. Japan's Food Safety Commission has ruled that beef from young American cattle is safe. I expect that the Japanese Government will follow through on

the recommendations of the commission so that America's beef industry and cattlemen will have access to a market that has been closed to them for almost 2 years.

I will also raise important trade issues on Sunday during my meeting in Beijing with President Hu of China. Access to American markets has played an important role in China's economic development. And China needs to provide a level playing field for American farmers and businesses seeking access to China's market. The United States supported China's membership in the World Trade Organization because we believe that the cause of free and fair trade is advanced if China plays by the same global rules as everyone else.

When I met with President Hu in New York earlier this year, he said that China would bring more balance to our trade and protect intellectual property rights. I welcomed those commitments, just as I welcomed China's announcement in July that it would implement a flexible market-based exchange system for its currency. These statements are a good beginning, but China needs to take action to ensure these goals are fully implemented.

The textile agreement our two nations recently reached shows that with hard work and determination, we can come together to resolve difficult trading issues. The agreement adds certainty and predictability for businesses in both America and China. I look forward to frank discussions on Sunday with President Hu about our need to find solutions to our trade differences with China.

America is drawn by trade and values and history to be part of Asia's future. The extraordinary economic growth of the Asia-Pacific region has delivered prosperity to millions of people, and it has created many new opportunities for American workers, farmers, and businesses. America is a nation founded on the idea of open exchange. And we know that free and fair trade benefits all sides.

We also know that American workers can compete with anybody, anytime, anywhere when the rules are fair. By opening new markets, we will create more good jobs in America. By ensuring fair access for American goods and services and securing intellectual property rights, we will level the playing field for our workers, farmers, and businesses. And by working for free and fair trade, we will help deliver a better life for all Americans and advance the cause of peace and prosperity in the world.

Thank you for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 7 p.m. on November 18 in the Westin Chosun Hotel, Busan, South Korea, for broadcast at 11:06 a.m., e.s.t., on November 19. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on November 18 but was embargoed for release until the broadcast. Due to the 13-hour time difference, the radio address was broadcast after the President's remarks in Osan, South Korea. In his address, the President referred to Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi of Japan; and President Hu Jintao of China. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of this address.

Statement on Signing the Energy and Water Development Appropriations Act, 2006

November 19, 2005

I have signed into law H.R. 2419, the "Energy and Water Development Appropriations Act, 2006." The Act funds programs of the Department of Energy, the

Department of the Interior's Bureau of Reclamation, the Army Corps of Engineers, and several other agencies, and provides funds to help protect the Nation's environment.

The executive branch shall construe sections 101 and 303 of the Act as calling for, but not mandating, consultation with the Congress as a precondition to the execution of a law, as is consistent with the Constitution's provisions concerning the separate powers of the Congress to legislate and the President to execute the laws.

GEORGE W. BUSH

The White House,
November 19, 2005.

NOTE: H.R. 2419, approved November 19, was assigned Public Law No. 109–103. This statement was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on November 20. An original was not available for verification of the content of this statement.

Remarks Following a Church Service in Beijing, China
November 20, 2005

The President. Pastor, Laura and I thank you very much for your hospitality. Our friend Luis Palau, from America, is here as well. And you gave a great sermon.

Pastor Ying Dufeng. Thank you.

The President. The spirit of the Lord is very strong inside your church. We thank you for carrying a message of love, like you did.

You know, it wasn't all that long ago that people were not allowed to worship openly in this society. My hope is that the Government of China will not fear the Christians who gather to worship openly. A healthy society is a society that welcomes all faiths and gives people a chance to express themselves through worship with the Almighty. So we welcome—we really thank you for letting us come by, and we ask for God's blessings on you and your church.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8:22 a.m. at Gangwashi Protestant Church. In his remarks, he referred to Ying Dufeng, pastor, Gangwashi Protestant Church; and Luis Palau, founder, Luis Palau Association.

Remarks During an Expanded Meeting With President Hu Jintao of China in Beijing
November 20, 2005

Thank you, Mr. President. First of all, thank you for arranging such beautiful weather; it's a beautiful day.

Secondly, thank you for the very frank and candid discussion we just had on a range of issues. China is an exciting country, and it's an important country. And this visit is a chance for you and me to continue a very important relationship.

I invited the President to come to America as soon as he can. And I look forward to welcoming you, Mr. President, in our country, so we can continue our dialog on how to make our relations as open and

constructive for people in both our countries.

And so I really look forward to your hospitality, and thank you for such a warm opening ceremony. Thank you, sir.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:13 a.m. in the Fujian Room at the Great Hall of the People.

Remarks Following Discussions With President Hu in Beijing
November 20, 2005

President Hu. The honorable President, George W. Bush, dear friends from the media, ladies and gentlemen: I'm delighted to have this opportunity to meet with the press. And to begin with, I would like to extend a warmest welcome to President Bush. Welcome to China.

Just now I had a friendly and candid talk with President Bush. The two sides were able to have an indepth exchange of views on the China-U.S. relationship as well as on major international and regional issues of shared interest.

We both are very delighted to see the good development in the China-U.S. relationship over a recent period of time. We both believe that to keep the China-U.S. relationship on a track of sustained, healthy, and stable development is not only what is required by our times but also the shared aspiration of our two peoples.

We both agree to view and handle the China-U.S. relationship from a strategic plane and in a long-term perspective, jointly acceptable by our common interests, properly handle each other's concerns, increase our mutual understanding, expand our common ground, and deepen our mutual trust, in an effort to comprehensively move forward the China-U.S. constructive and cooperative relationship in the 21st century.

We both believe that it serves the common interests of our two countries and two peoples to further expand the economic cooperation and trade between our two countries. The two sides will continue to follow the principle of equality, mutual benefit, and common development, and continuously expand the scope of our cooperation in an effort to achieve mutual benefit and win-win results.

The two sides also expressed their willingness to join hands together to gradually achieve a balanced trade between China and the United States in the process of further expanding the trade between the two countries. The frictions and problems that may arise in this rapid development of the two-way trade may be properly addressed through consultations.

I made it clear to Mr. President that the Chinese side is willing to step up its protection for intellectual property rights, enhance its efforts in fighting crime involving the violations of intellectual property rights, and stands ready to further increase its cooperation with the United States in this regard. We will follow the principle of benefiting not only China but also the world at large and unswervingly press ahead with the reform of the formation mechanism for the RNB exchange rate.

We both indicated our willingness to deepen our counterterrorism cooperation on the basis of reciprocity and mutual benefit. The two sides have already reached a memorandum of understanding on their cooperation on the Megaport Initiative.

We both agree to further expand the exchanges and cooperation between the two countries in such fields as culture, education, science and technology, and youth.

We both believe that the spread and the possible spread to humans of the avian flu is a common threat facing all countries in this world, and we reached an agreement on strengthening a joint initiative on better cooperation in the prevention and control of the avian flu. And we will jointly support and take part in the prevention and control cooperation of avian flu in the region and the world at large.

I reaffirmed to President Bush that the Chinese Government and that the Chinese people are committed to peace and stability in the Taiwan Strait, and we are ready to do our utmost with all sincerity to strive for the prospect of a peaceful reunification of our country. This being said, we will by no means tolerate so-called Taiwan independence. I highly appreciate that President Bush has, on various occasions, stated his commitment to the "one China" policy, the three Sino-U.S. joint communiques, and his opposition to so-called Taiwan independence. To oppose and check so-called Taiwan independence and safeguard peace and stability in the Taiwan Strait serves the common interest of China and the United States.

We both believe that China and United States share broad, common interests on a number of important issues like the U.N. reform, the development issue facilitating the Doha round negotiations, addressing regional flashpoints, preventing and tackling terrorism, and preventing the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, preventing and controlling natural disasters, and controlling epidemic and other major diseases. And we also shoulder great common responsibilities in all those areas. The two sides both agree to step up their cooperation in the affairs in the Asia-Pacific region and in the world arena.

We both said that major progress for current stage has been produced at the fourth round of the six-party talks, and as far as the first phase of the fifth round of the six-party talks is concerned, generally speaking, the atmosphere has been businesslike and pragmatic. The two sides will continue to work together with other parties involved to move forward the process of the six-party talks in an endeavor to peacefully resolve the nuclear issue on the Korean Peninsula at an early date.

Besides, I also briefed President Bush about China's unswerving commitment to a role of peaceful development and China's development in terms of democratic politics and human rights. China's commitment to a role of peaceful development is a choice that China must make in light of its national conditions. It's a choice that China must make on the basis of its historical and cultural heritage, and also a choice that China must make in light of the current trend in the development of the world. China's development is peaceful, open, and cooperative in nature.

Ever since the founding of the People's Republic several decades ago, and particularly since the start of China's reforms and opening up, notable and historic progress has been made in China's development of a democratic political system and human rights. The Chinese people are exercising their right of democratic elections, democratic decisionmaking, democratic management, and democratic supervision, according to law.

In the future, we'll continue to take into account China's national conditions and follow the wishes of the Chinese people and continuously build democratic politics of Chinese characteristics in the process of continuously raising the level of human rights enjoyed by the Chinese people.

Win-win cooperation is the mainstream of the China-U.S. relationship. Given their different histories, cultures, and national conditions, it is inevitable that China and the United States may have some different opinions on some issues. The two sides ought to follow a spirit of mutual respect and seeking common ground while reserving their differences and act on the basis of the basic norms governing international

relations and handle and advance their differences properly through dialog.

President Bush issued a kind invitation to me for a visit to the United States, which I accepted with pleasure. Ladies and gentlemen, looking ahead, the Chinese side is willing to work together with the U.S. side to continuously move forward the China-U.S. relationship and continuously move forward the lofty cause of mankind, peace, and development, to the benefit of the Chinese and American peoples and people throughout the world.

Thank you. Now the floor is yours, Mr. President.

President Bush. Mr. President, thank you very much, and thank you for your hospitality. Laura and I are glad to be back in China. And I thank you for the constructive conversation we just had.

The United States and China share many common opportunities and challenges in the 21st century. We're important trading partners. We benefit from a system of free and fair trade. We'll continue to work with China to open up markets and level the playing field for American goods and services and work with China to strengthen protection of intellectual property rights. And we'll continue to work with China to help implement its July commitment to a flexible market-based currency.

It is important that social, political, and religious freedoms grow in China. And we encourage China to continue making the historic transition to greater freedom.

The United States expresses our deepest condolences to China for the Chinese citizens killed in the terrorist attack in Amman, Jordan. Terrorism is a threat to both our countries, and I welcome China's cooperation in the war against terror.

Our two nations seek a Korean Peninsula that is stable, at peace, and free of nuclear weapons. Thank you for taking a lead in the six-party talks. The fourth round of the six-party talks in September ended with a joint statement in which North Korea committed to abandon all nuclear weapons and all existing nuclear programs. The United States expects them to honor that commitment.

And we had a good talk about energy. China is a growing economy, and China recognizes, like the United States recognizes, in order to keep our economies growing in the years to come, we've got to share technologies and diversify away from hydrocarbons.

Our two countries are working together to address the threat of the pandemic disease through the international partnership on avian and pandemic influenza. Mr. President, thank you for your lead on this issue. The President gave a very strong statement at APEC about the need for all of us to work together on a potential pandemic.

The relationship between China and the United States is an important relationship. This trip will make it stronger. And, Mr. President, Laura and I look forward to welcoming you and Madam Liu to the White House next year. Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:05 p.m. in the Hebei Room at the Great Hall of the People. In his remarks, he referred to Liu Yongqing, wife of President Hu.

Remarks Prior to Discussions With Premier Wen Jiabao of China in Beijing *November 20, 2005*

It's good to see you again, sir. I remember our visit very well. And I thank you for this invitation to come and talk and to have lunch. It will give us a chance

to continue to strengthen this very important relationship. And I agree with you; it's a relationship where we've got common interests. We don't agree on every issue, but we do agree we should discuss our differences and our likenesses in a cordial manner.

And so I look forward to this meeting a lot. Thank you for having us.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:07 p.m. at the Diaoyutai Guest House.

Remarks and an Exchange With Reporters in Beijing
November 20, 2005

President's Visit to China/Domestic Debate on Iraq

The President. Thank you all. We started our day here going to a church service that was really uplifting. I was—I wasn't sure what to expect, and I can tell you that the service was full of spirit, and the preacher gave a really good sermon. She was—I'm sure you made her nervous with all the cameras and everything, but she was really good. And it was a wonderful way to start the morning.

As I mentioned to the President as well as to you all on the steps of the church, a society that welcomes religion is a wholesome society; it's a whole society. And I felt like the church service was a affirmation of my strong belief that people should be able to worship freely, and I shared that with President Hu.

I was also pleased with our talks with both President Hu and Premier Wen. And we have a complex relationship, and it's a really important relationship. I mean, China is a big, growing, strong country. And it's very important for me to maintain a good working relationship with the leadership here. And we've got that. And the reason that's important is that it enables me to talk about the values that are important to America. It also enables me to talk about the interests of our workers and farmers. China is a trading partner, and we expect the trade with China to be fair. We expect our people to be treated fairly here in this important country.

And so I had a chance to talk about a variety of subjects, intellectual property rights and the currency, access to our markets for U.S. beef. And it was a good, frank discussion.

Finally, I had a bike ride. I'd like to clarify my comments. Compared to Crawford, this trail is a great bike trail and really difficult. It is clear that I couldn't make the Chinese Olympic cycling team. But I really enjoyed it. It was a lot of fun to ride with those six young Chinese athletes, and I hope they enjoyed it as well. It was a good experience.

There's also an important debate underway back in Washington about the way forward in Iraq. I particularly want to discuss the position that Democrat Congressman John Murtha announced this past week. Let me start off by saying that Congressman Murtha is a fine man, a good man, who served our country with honor and distinction as a marine in Vietnam and as a United States Congressman. He is a strong supporter of the United States military. And I know the decision to call for an immediate withdrawal of our troops by Congressman Murtha was done in a careful and thoughtful way.

I disagree with his position. An immediate withdrawal of our troops from Iraq will only strengthen the terrorists' hand in Iraq and in the broader war on terror.

That's the goal of the enemy. They want to break our will in Iraq so that we leave and they can turn Iraq into what Afghanistan was under the Taliban, a safe haven for terror, a place where they can plot and plan attacks against America and freedom-loving countries around the world.

Our military strategy is aimed at targeting the terrorists and training the Iraqis. Iraq authorities have made clear they want us to help them. They want us to help them defeat the terrorists, and they want us to train their own security forces, which is what we're doing.

I also recognize that the Iraqi people look forward to the day when Iraqi forces can secure their country and defend their freedom. It's only natural that the Iraqi people look forward to the day when they're fully prepared to defeat this enemy. I look forward to the day when the Iraqis are fully prepared to do that.

And we're making good progress. More and more Iraqis are taking the fight to the enemy, and day by day, they're assuming more responsibility for their own security. And as the Iraqi security forces gain strength and experience, we can lessen our troop presence in the country without losing our capability to effectively defeat the terrorists. A reduced presence of coalition forces will clearly demonstrate to the Iraqi people that we have no ambition to occupy their country. As I've often said, we'll stay as long as necessary but not one day more. Yet leaving prematurely will have terrible consequences for our own security and for the Iraqi people. And that's not going to happen so long as I'm the President.

This is a debate worthy of our country. It's an important debate. It does not have to be a partisan issue. Fine Democrats like Senator Joe Lieberman share the view that we must prevail in Iraq. Bipartisan majorities in the House and the Senate rejected calls for immediate withdrawal. My decisions in Iraq will continue to be guided by the sober judgment of the military commanders on the ground in Iraq. Those elected leaders in Washington who do not support our policies in Iraq have every right to voice their dissent. They also have a responsibility to provide a credible alternative. The stakes are too high and the national interest too important for anything otherwise.

Now I'll be glad to answer some questions, starting with Jennifer [Jennifer Loven, Associated Press].

Democracy and Human Rights Issues in China

Q. Thank you, sir. Can you talk about why you have chosen to talk more about the need for greater religious freedoms in China than the need for greater political freedoms?

The President. Well, they go hand in hand. A society which recognizes religious freedom is a society which will recognize political freedoms as well. China has undergone an amazing transformation in its economy. It's a much freer economy than any time in its past. And as a result, the people are becoming more prosperous. I've always believed that a free economy will yield a freer political system.

I think about South Korea. South Korea opened its economy up, and then political reforms followed. And part of a system which recognizes the right of people to express themselves is a system which also recognizes the right of people to worship freely. And in my discussions with the leadership in China, of course, I talked about both political and religious freedom.

Caren [Caren Bohan, Reuters].

Discussions With President Hu

Q. Thank you, sir. Do you feel that you've got the commitments that you sought from President Hu on issues like currency reform and trade? And also, are you concerned about a crackdown reported on Chinese dissidents ahead of your visit?

The President. I'm always concerned about somebody who is trying to express themselves in the public square, express

their opinion, being cracked down by a state. And it's—again, in my discussions with President Hu, I talked about a variety of concerns: One, that the NGOs here in China ought to be treated fairly; secondly, that we have given the Chinese Government a list of dissidents that we believe are improperly in prison—imprisoned.

I talked about the Dalai Lama. I thought it would be wise for the Chinese Government to invite the Dalai Lama so he can tell them exactly what he told me in the White House the other day, that he has no desire for an independent Tibet. I talked about the Catholic Church, the need for this Government to invite leaders from the Vatican to come and discuss religious freedoms in China. So we discussed a lot of areas of concern about the condition of the dissidents and people who want to express themselves.

In terms of the currency, this Government made a decision last July to reform their currency. It was a structural reform, and I applaud that. I also reminded the leaders that we've seen some movement but not much in the currency valuation. And I explained to them as clearly as I could that the value of the Chinese currency is very important for manufacturers and farmers and workers in the United States.

In terms of intellectual property rights, that's been a concern that many have expressed to me in our country and wanted me to express to the leadership in China. And I made it clear that if you've got a vibrant economy and people feel uncomfortable about piracy of product, that it's going to affect the economy in the long run. And they recognize that. As a matter of fact, Premier Wen went through a list of crackdowns this Government has taken on intellectual property rights.

I talked about market access, the need to make sure that we've got access to Chinese markets like they've got to ours. And that's a very important subject in America, as you know, and it's one that I relayed to both President Hu and Premier Wen. I applauded the fact that through hard work, that we came up with a good textile agreement, which is important. I was pleased to see that the Chinese Government ordered Boeing aircraft.

The relationship, however, is one that it's got to be close enough that we can—need to consistently remind our Chinese friends that structural reform is really what the United States Government is talking about with China.

Let's see—Bill Roberts [Bloomberg News].

Domestic Debate on Iraq

Q. Thank you, Mr. President.

The President. Yes.

Q. It used to be that it was said that politics stopped at the water's edge. On this trip, clearly, the debate over Iraq has followed you. Were you at all disappointed by that? And why do you think it is that the Iraq debate in the last week has been so intense?

The President. Well, I'm not surprised that people are talking about Iraq. Iraq is a vital issue for the United States of America. And it's—we're at war, and people, of course, have got strong opinions about war. On the trip here, by the way, I was most pleased that many of the leaders at the APEC conference understood the stakes in Iraq, that a democracy in the heart of the Middle East will make the entire world more peaceful.

It's a—this is a worthy debate, and I'm going to repeat something I've said before: People should feel comfortable about expressing their opinions about Iraq. I heard somebody say, "Well, maybe so-and-so is not patriotic because they disagree with my position." I totally reject that thought. This is not an issue of who's patriotic and who's not patriotic. It's an issue of an honest, open debate about the way forward in Iraq.

I am confident we will succeed in Iraq. I'm confident that the Iraqi forces will be trained. I am confident the political process

will, slowly but surely, marginalize those that are trying to stop the march of democracy. And I also know that we have got to make sure that Iraq does not become a safe haven for terrorists. It's very important for—during this debate to listen to the words of Zawahiri, who's the number-two man of Al Qaida, where he has made it very clear that his intention and the intention of his henchman, Zarqawi, is to drive us out of Iraq before we have completed the mission.

And there's a reason why he wants us out of Iraq, because he wants Iraq to be a safe haven. He wants to be able to find a place where he and his forces can plot and plan against the United States of America. They were—the Al Qaida, the enemy was able to do just that in Afghanistan. They plotted and planned a monstrous attack on the United States of America. And that attack of September the 11th is a lesson we should never forget.

Secondly, a democracy in Iraq is going to send a clear example of what is possible to other reformers in the region. There are people in Iran that are interested in freedom. And when Iraq succeeds, the people in Iran will see what is possible, that it's possible to have a government that actually listens to the people and responds to the needs of the people. A free Iraq will send a clear example to the Palestinians of what is possible in the Middle East. And I believe there will be a Palestinian state that is democratic in nature and at peace with its neighbor, Israel. Lebanon is an example of a society which is shedding itself of a—of its neighbor, Syria, and it's strengthening its democracy.

You know, it's interesting here in the Far East that we have this discussion about Iraq, and it's an appropriate place to think about the stakes in Iraq, because, after all, Japan was our sworn enemy. And after World War II, the Japanese adopted a Japanese-style democracy, which yielded a peaceful partner, an ally. It's amazing to think that in 60 years, Japan has gone from enemy to ally in keeping the peace. The spread of democracies here in the Far East have made this part of the world a peaceful region.

And so the stakes are enormously high in Iraq, and I can understand why there's a debate. And I suspect there's going to be a debate for a long time coming in Iraq, as there should be. This is a serious matter of national concern.

Let's see—Suzanne [Suzanne Malveaux, Cable News Network].

Representative Murtha/U.S. Strategy in Iraq

Q. If I could follow up on your comments on Congressman Murtha. You said that he was a fine man and that he probably made this in a thoughtful manner. Congressman Murtha has also used the fact that neither you nor the Vice President has served in combat as part of his criticism of Iraq policy as well as the administration's campaign to defend it. Do you believe that that is relevant to the debate? And is there any concern that the attacks on either side are becoming overly personal?

The President. No, I don't think the Vice President's service is relevant in this debate. And I would hope all of us in this debate talk about the policy and have an honest, open debate about whether or not it makes sense to immediately withdraw our troops. My position is very clear: It does not make sense. It will make America less secure. Iraq is a battlefront in the war on terror, and it's vital that we succeed in this particular battle in the war on terror.

And our strategy is proceeding. There's a political strategy, and as I said the other day, or I said a couple of times, the progress in Iraq is amazing when you think—the political progress. I mean, they've gone from tyranny to the election of a Transitional National Government to the ratification of a constitution. And they're about to have elections again. And all this took place in 2½ years. When you compare it to our own history, our road

was quite bumpy getting to a constitution. And so the progress is strong.

The other progress that's being made is the training of the Iraqi forces. And more and more of the forces are more capable of taking the fight to the enemy. And as that happens and as our commanders on the ground inform me that Iraq's security can be maintained by Iraqi troops, we will adjust accordingly.

Let's see—Mike [Mike Allen, Time].

Religious Freedom in China

Q. Thank you very much, Mr. President. If I might follow up Jennifer's question. When you expressed to President Hu the importance of people being able to worship freely, did he express any interest in helping people of various faiths do that? Did he make any commitment to you for improvements? And, Mr. President, how repressed or restricted do you believe Christians are right now in this country?

The President. It's a really interesting question. You know, Dr. Luis Palau was with me, and we spent time in the limousine on the way to the church talking about his views of Christianity here in China. He believes there are about a hundred million Christians, and that they are—they're worshiping in a way that is able to call upon the Almighty to help them through their lives. And that's the spirit I found in the church.

President Hu is a thoughtful fellow. He listened to what I had to say. And I thought it was very interesting in his comments that he talked about human rights. Those who watch China closely would say that maybe a decade ago, a leader wouldn't have uttered those comments. He talked about democracy. And so to answer your question, he took it on board in a very thoughtful manner.

Herman [Ken Herman, Austin American-Statesman], last question.

China-U.S. Relations

Q. Respectfully, sir—and you know we're always respectful—[*laughter*]——

The President. Most of the time.

Q. ——in your statement this morning with President Hu, you seemed a little off your game. You seemed to hurry through your statement, and there was a lack of enthusiasm——

The President. When? Here, right now?

Q. No, this morning with President Hu. Was something bothering you? Were you tired?

The President. Have you ever heard of jetlag?

Q. Yes, sir.

The President. Well, good. That answers your question.

Q. There was nothing he said, I mean, in the meeting?

The President. No, not at all. Listen, the relationship with China is a good, vibrant, strong relationship. And we have frank discussions, and that's what you want at my level of Government. You want to be able to sit down with somebody and say, "Listen, here are my concerns."

I always say that the relationship between America and China is an important relationship. This is a booming economy. This is a—China is a big presence in Asia. And it's very vital for the United States to have a relationship where I can sit down and say, "Look, the trade policy must take into consideration your currency, must take into consideration our desire to sell you beef, must take into consideration intellectual property rights." And I can do that in such a way that he doesn't say, "I'm tired of listening to you." It's an important relationship.

We have—we're working together with North Korea. The leader in North Korea has—must abandon his nuclear weapons programs in a verifiable fashion. The Chinese understand that and have accepted that position. The fact that China and the United States can work on this issue as

equal partners is important for the stability of this region and the world.

In other words, my point to you is, is that we've got a very vibrant relationship. I don't know what I sounded like during my discussion. As you know, I don't spend a lot of time analyzing myself and, obviously, you do. But——

Q. We have a lot of time on our hands, Mr. President. [*Laughter*]

The President. Yes, you do. [*Laughter*] But I am pleased that I am in a position to be able to explain to President Hu, as clearly as I can, my concerns and my appreciation for different aspects of our relationship.

Q. A very quick followup, if I may.

The President. Thank you all very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 6:12 p.m. at the St. Regis Hotel. In his remarks, he referred to Ying Dufeng, pastor, Gangwashi Protestant Church; President Hu Jintao and Premier Wen Jiabao of China; the Dalai Lama Tenin Gyatso of Tibet; senior Al Qaida associate Abu Musab Al Zarqawi; Ayman Al-Zawahiri, founder of the Egyptian Islamic Jihad and senior Al Qaida associate; Luis Palau, founder, Luis Palau Association; and Chairman Kim Chong-il of North Korea.

Remarks in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia
November 21, 2005

Amar bain uu? Thanks for the warm welcome. And, Mr. President, thank you for your hospitality. I thank you, the Prime Minister, and the Government for such gracious hospitality. I want to thank the First Lady for being so kind to Laura. It is really, really an honor to be here in your great country. And we bring with us the good wishes of the American people.

I'm here on an important international mission. Secretary Rumsfeld asked me to check on his horse. [*Laughter*] I feel very much at home here in your country. This is a beautiful land with huge skies and vast horizons, kind of like Texas. I thank you for the invitation. I'm honored to be the first sitting American President to visit Mongolia, and America is proud to call you the third neighbor.

Fifteen years ago, Mongolians gathered outside this great hall by the thousands, braving subzero temperatures and defying a repressive regime to demand their liberty. The protesters included students and workers and monks and a group of young democrats on a hunger strike. By the force of their convictions, they drove the communist leadership from power. Within months, free elections were held, and a free Mongolia was born. And today, one of the young hunger strikers who stood vigil outside the building now serves as the Prime Minister of your great nation.

Mongolia has made the transition from communism to freedom, and in just 15 years, you've established a vibrant democracy and opened up your economy. You're an example of success for this region and for the world. I know the transition to liberty has not always been easy, and Americans admire your patience and your determination. By your daily efforts, you're building a better life for your children and your grandchildren. And I've come to tell you, as you build a free society in the heart of central Asia, the American people stand with you.

Earlier this year, when a terrible hurricane struck my Nation's gulf coast, the Mongolian people stood with us. Even before the flood waters had fully receded, your Government pledged aid, and a group

of business leaders in Mongolia raised additional money. These funds are helping to rebuild shattered lives in my country. In a time of tragedy for America, Mongolia showed her compassionate heart, and my country thanks you for your support and friendship.

Americans and Mongolians have much in common. Both our nations were settled by pioneers on horseback who tamed the rugged plains. Both our nations shook the yoke of colonial rule and built successful free societies. And both our nations know that our responsibilities in freedom's cause do not end at our borders and that survival of liberty in our own lands increasingly depends on the success of liberty in other lands.

This conviction has inspired the Mongolian people to share the hope of freedom with others who have not known it. Mongolian officers have served in missions to keep the peace in Western Sahara and the Congo. Your forces are serving alongside U.S. and coalition forces helping to train the armed forces of a free Afghanistan. And in September, Mongolia sent its fifth rotation of forces to Iraq, and Mongolian soldiers are serving in that country with courage and great distinction.

Two Mongolian soldiers named Sergeants Azzaya and Sambuu-Yondon are here with us today. In Iraq, they risked their lives to stop a suicide bomber who was trying to drive a truck full of explosives into a coalition mess tent. As the truck hurtled towards them, they opened fire, killing the terrorist and saving countless lives. As Commander in Chief of the United States Armed Forces, I thank these brave Mongolian soldiers and all who have served on the frontlines of the war on terror. The Mongolian Armed Forces are serving the cause of freedom, and the United States Armed Forces are proud to serve beside such fearless warriors.

In Iraq, Mongolian forces have helped make possible a stunning transformation. Earlier this year, Iraqis went to the polls and chose their leaders in free elections. Last month, they returned to the polls and approved a democratic constitution for a free Iraq. And in a few weeks time, Iraqis will vote once again to choose a fully constitutional government to lead them for the next 4 years. With their ballots, the Iraqi people are sending a clear message: There will be no return to the days of tyranny and terror; the future of Iraq belongs to freedom.

Many of you can still recall the exhilaration of voting freely for the first time after decades of tyranny. You know the satisfaction of seeing leaders you chose take office and of seeing them leave office if you decide to replace them. You know the feeling of living under a constitution that guarantees personal liberties like free speech, free assembly, and equality before the law. And now, because of the courage of Mongolian and coalition forces, the people of Iraq know this feeling as well.

In Iraq, the advance of freedom is opposed by determined adversaries, the followers of a murderous ideology, who exploit the religion of Islam to serve a violent political vision. They kill the innocent in pursuit of a totalitarian empire that denies all political and religious freedom. Like the ideology of communism, the ideology of Islamic radicalism is led by a self-appointed vanguard that presumes to speak for the masses. Like the ideology of communism, Islamic radicalism teaches the innocent can be murdered to serve their brutal aims. Like the ideology of communism, Islamic radicalism is dismissive of free peoples, claiming that men and women who live in liberty are weak and decadent. And like the ideology of communism, the ideology of Islamic radicalism is destined to fall because the will to power is no match for the universal desire to live in liberty.

Free people did not falter in the cold war, and free people will not falter in the war on terror. We see the determination to live in freedom in the courage of Iraqi

and Afghan citizens who defied the terrorists to cast their ballots. We see it in the bravery of ordinary Lebanese who waved cedar flags and drove an occupying power from their borders. And we've seen it in the daily courage of the Mongolian people who claimed their freedom 15 years ago and are now standing with others across the world to help them do the same.

As you help others secure the blessings of liberty, you continue the work of building a free society here at home, and as you travel this path, the United States walks with you. Earlier this year, I announced a new Solidarity Initiative to provide financial assistance to nations like Mongolia that are standing with America in the war on terror. Mongolia will receive $11 million under this initiative, critical funds to help you improve your military forces so we can continue working together for the cause of peace and freedom.

Mongolia has undertaken political and economic reforms. You have now held numerous free elections and two peaceful transitions of power from one party to another, which is a sign of a successful democracy. This year, Mongolia ratified the United Nations Convention against Corruption, and I urge your Parliament to pass the anticorruption legislation needed to implement that treaty. After decades of centralization, you privatized more than 80 percent of Mongolia's state enterprises, and the Mongolian economy grew at a rate of more than 10 percent last year.

In recognition of your progress, Mongolia has been named a country eligible for assistance under the Millennium Challenge Account, a new program the United States has established to assist countries that govern justly, invest in their people, and promote economic freedom. My administration is committed to working with your country to complete a Millennium Challenge compact as soon as possible and to help the Mongolian people continue on the path of reform.

Next year, your country will celebrate the 800th anniversary of the founding of Mongolia. There's a legend of a Mongolian woman who gave each of her five sons an arrow. She told each to break the arrow in his hand, which they did. She then tied the five arrows together, and told each to try and break the bundle. None could do it. And she told them, brothers who stand alone like single arrow shafts can be broken by anyone, but brothers who stand together like a bundle of arrows cannot be broken. Today, Mongolia and the United States are standing together as brothers in the cause of freedom. And if free nations remain united, no force of tyranny or terror will break us.

I've come here to thank you for your contributions to freedom's cause and to tell you that the American people appreciate your courage and value your friendship. And on behalf of all Americans, *ikh bayarlalaa.* And may God bless your wonderful country. Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:13 p.m. in the Conference Hall at the Government House. In his remarks, he referred to President Nambaryn Enkhbayar and his wife, Onongiin Tsolmon, and Prime Minister Tsakhia Elbegdorj of Mongolia.

Joint Statement Between Mongolia and the United States of America
November 21, 2005

President George W. Bush and President Nambaryn Enkhbayar today reaffirmed the longstanding friendship between the United

States of America and Mongolia and committed to defining guiding principles and expanding the framework of the comprehensive partnership between their two democratic countries based on shared values and common strategic interests, as declared in the Joint Presidential Statement of July 15, 2004.

On behalf of the American people, President Bush expressed his appreciation for the outpouring of sympathy and generous financial assistance from the government and people of Mongolia for the victims of Hurricane Katrina. President Bush welcomed Mongolia's progress toward becoming a mature and stable democracy, which observes human rights and civil liberties, and a private sector-led free market economy.

He congratulated the people of Mongolia, on behalf of the American people, for qualifying for eligibility for the Millennium Challenge Account, and looked forward to the successful conclusion of a Compact that will reduce poverty through economic growth and reflect the Government of Mongolia's commitment to continued political and economic reform. Mindful of the role that rule of law, good governance, transparency, and public sector accountability play in building democracy and prosperity, the two presidents welcomed Mongolia's recent ratification of the UN Convention Against Corruption.

The two presidents agreed to work together to facilitate Mongolia's participation in regional and international political, economic and financial structures. They also agreed to enhance their cooperation against all forms of organized, transnational crime, to include trafficking in people, counterfeiting, money-laundering, and terrorist financing. President Bush welcomed Mongolia's support for the Proliferation Security Initiative to halt the spread of weapons of mass destruction (WMD) and for its commitment to sign and ratify the UN Convention against Transnational Organized Crime.

The two presidents reviewed the work being conducted under the Trade and Investment Framework Agreement (TIFA) to promote bilateral trade and investment, and expressed the hope that this will lead to a closer bilateral economic and trade relationship.

Recognizing the potential threat to human health posed by avian and other forms of influenza, the two presidents agreed on the importance of bilateral and multilateral cooperation in the International Partnership on Avian and Pandemic Influenza.

President Bush and President Enkhbayar underscored their strong commitment to fight terrorism, which undermines international peace and security. President Bush applauded Mongolia's participation in the stabilization and reconstruction of Afghanistan and Iraq, including its peacekeeping commitment to the Multinational Force in Iraq. The United States and Mongolia agreed to continue working to advance Mongolia's contribution to international peace support efforts.

They also agreed that the establishment of a free, democratic Iraq is important to democracy, peace and stability in the Middle East and the United Nations should play a leading role in the process. The two leaders underlined the importance of multilateral cooperation and, in this context, agreed on the need to pursue reform of the United Nations as a means to improving its effectiveness. President Bush and President Enkhbayar also emphasized the importance of implementing the September 2005 Joint Statement on the denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula, issued by the members of the Six Party Talks.

The two presidents affirmed the value of educational and cultural exchanges to enhance understanding between the citizens of the two countries and agreed to promote people-to-people exchanges and educational cooperation. President Bush also expressed

appreciation for the ratification of the bilateral International School of Ulaanbaatar Agreement which will help to ensure the availability of high quality, U.S.-accredited education for its students. The presidents noted the successful and positive contribution of the Peace Corps program in Mongolia.

The two presidents stated their expectations for the continued and steady growth of the U.S.-Mongolia relationship, based on mutual respect and equitable partnership, and reaffirmed that such growth will be in the national interest of both countries.

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

Memorandum on the National Flood Insurance Program
November 21, 2005

Memorandum for the Secretary of Homeland Security

Subject: National Flood Insurance Program

I have reviewed your request for approval to issue notes to the Secretary of the Treasury in excess of $3.5 billion, but not to exceed $18.5 billion, for the National Flood Insurance Program and am hereby granting approval for you to do so.

GEORGE W. BUSH

Remarks at the Thanksgiving Turkey Presentation Ceremony
November 22, 2005

Thank you all. Welcome to the White House. Thank you for coming this afternoon. It's a pleasure to be able to introduce you, soon, to the National Thanksgiving Turkey. His name is Marshmallow. [*Laughter*] The alternative turkey's name is Yam. [*Laughter*] He's around here somewhere. He's not going to be in this room. He's in a pickup truck hanging out by the South Lawn. [*Laughter*]

This is what we call—the White House is called the people's house, and we're going to call Marshmallow and Yam the people's turkeys. They made it here through a democratic process. There was a nationwide election on the White House web site. In the end, the voters made the choice, and it was a close election. You might say it was neck and neck. [*Laughter*]

I'm going to grant a pardon this afternoon, and the pardon I grant comes with a new measure of responsibility and fame for Marshmallow and Yam. In the past years, the turkeys I spared went on to lead lives of leisure at Frying Pan Park in the State of Virginia. This year is going to be a little different. Marshmallow and Yam were a little skeptical about going to a place called Frying Pan Park. I don't blame them. So I'm proud to announce that Marshmallow and Yam will serve as honorary grand marshals at Disneyland's Thanksgiving Day Parade. And they'll go on to spend the rest of their natural lives at Disneyland.

The granting of the turkey pardon is not a responsibility that I take lightly, and I want to thank all of those who helped plan today's event. I appreciate the efforts of

those of you from the National Turkey Federation, especially Chairman Pete Rothfork and President Alice Johnson. Welcome. Glad you all are here. I want to thank James and Vicki Trites from Trites Farm in Henning, Minnesota. Where are they, the Trites? There they are, right there. Welcome. Thanks for coming. I know that Marshmallow and Yam are going to feel pretty good strutting around sunny California, remembering the cold days of Minnesota. [*Laughter*] Glad you all are here.

We've also got some other special guests in the audience who exemplify the spirit of Thanksgiving. And those are the students from Clarksville Elementary School, from Clarksville, Maryland. Anybody here from Clarksville Elementary? Welcome. We're glad you're here. Thanks for coming. These students raised more than $17,000 for the Red Cross fund to benefit Hurricane Katrina victims. Thanks a lot for your hard work in helping somebody else. They're here with the assistant principal, Amy Green. I suspect some teachers and parents are here with them. Thank you all for teaching. Thanks for being good parents. Their compassion and dedication show the good heart of our country, and I'm proud you all are here at the White House.

Thanksgiving is a holiday rooted in the American spirit of gratitude and sharing. We see this spirit in America today. When the communities along the gulf coast were devastated by Hurricane Katrina, Americans came together to provide help for their neighbors in need. It was a remarkable outpouring of compassion and generosity. That outpouring of compassion demonstrated once again that the great strength of our country lies in the hearts and souls of our citizens.

We also give thanks on Thanksgiving for our many blessings, and we thank those who are far away from home who protect our freedoms. It's through the courage and skill of our Armed Forces that we're safe as a nation, and we're very proud of their service.

We think of our military families who will have an empty seat at the table this Thanksgiving. The American people are thankful for the sacrifice of the American military families as well. America's men and women in uniform and their families have our gratitude, not only on Thanksgiving but on every day.

Our guest of honor seems about ready to come on in and say hello. So without further ado, I grant Marshmallow and Yam a Presidential pardon. In the meantime, may God bless you all and your families during this Thanksgiving season.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:11 p.m. in Presidential Hall at the Dwight D. Eisenhower Executive Office Building. The Thanksgiving Day proclamation of November 18 is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

Statement on Signing the Science, State, Justice, Commerce, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2006

November 22, 2005

Today, I have signed into law H.R. 2862, the "Science, State, Justice, Commerce, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2006." The Act funds the Departments of Justice, Commerce, and State, and several independent agencies, including the Federal Trade Commission, the Small Business Administration, and the Securities and Exchange Commission.

The executive branch shall construe as advisory the provisions of the Act that purport to direct or burden the Executive's conduct of foreign relations, including the authority to recognize foreign states and negotiate international agreements on behalf of the United States, or limit the President's authority as Commander in Chief. These provisions include sections 405, 413, 414, 631, 637, and language under the headings "International Trade Administration, Operations and Administration" and "Contributions for International Peacekeeping Activities."

GEORGE W. BUSH

The White House,
November 22, 2005.

NOTE: H.R. 2862, approved November 22, was assigned Public Law No. 109–108.

Message on the First Anniversary of the Orange Revolution
November 22, 2005

I send greetings to those celebrating the first anniversary of the Orange Revolution.

One year ago today, hundreds of thousands of Ukrainian citizens stood up to defend democracy in their homeland. Through great courage and determination, they showed the world that the love of liberty is stronger than the will of tyranny. Last year's revolution was a powerful example of freedom and democracy in action and an inspiration to those aspiring for freedom in their own land.

Ukraine's leadership now faces an historic opportunity and has an historic responsibility to fulfill the promise of the Orange Revolution and continue to transform Ukraine into a fully democratic state. The United States will continue to support the efforts of President Viktor Yushchenko in advancing a democratic, prosperous, and secure Ukraine, and America is proud to call Ukraine a friend.

Laura and I send our best wishes on this special occasion.

GEORGE W. BUSH

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

Letter to Congressional Leaders on Blocking Property of Additional Persons Undermining Democratic Processes or Institutions in Zimbabwe
November 22, 2005

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

Pursuant to the International Emergency Economic Powers Act, as amended (50 U.S.C. 1701 *et seq.*), I hereby report that I have issued an Executive Order that amends Executive Order 13288 of March 6, 2003, and expands the authority for blocking property and interests in property.

Executive Order 13288 blocked the property of 77 persons responsible for hindering the democratic transition in Zimbabwe. It provided for the secondary designation of persons owned or controlled by, or acting or purporting to act, directly or indirectly, for or on behalf of any of the 77 persons listed in its Annex.

Since Executive Order 13288 was issued in March 2003, conditions in Zimbabwe have continued to deteriorate. The government continues to suppress opposition groups and civil society, undermine the independent media, ignore decisions by its courts, and refuse to enter into meaningful negotiations with other political actors. Zimbabwe's parliamentary elections in March 2005 were not free or fair. Recent demolitions of low income housing and informal markets have caused 700,000 people to lose their homes, jobs, or both. Additional measures are required to promote democratic change.

The new order adds primary designation authority to Executive Order 13288, as well as authority to designate immediate family members of, and those who provide support to, sanctioned persons. It also adds authority to determine that circumstances no longer warrant the blocking of property and interests in property of a person listed on the Annex. Specifically, the new order will allow the Secretary of the Treasury, in consultation with the Secretary of State, to designate those who have engaged in actions or policies to undermine Zimbabwe's democratic processes or institutions, thus contributing to the deliberate breakdown in the rule of law in Zimbabwe, to politically motivated violence and intimidation in that country, or to political and economic instability in the Southern African region. It will also allow for secondary designations of persons determined to have materially assisted, sponsored, or provided financial, material, or technological support for, or goods or services in support of, such actions or policies or any persons sanctioned pursuant to Executive Order 13288, as amended (the "order"). It will further allow for the secondary designations of those persons who are or have been immediate family members of, or are owned or controlled by or acting for or on behalf of, any persons sanctioned pursuant to the order.

Accompanying the new order is an Annex that replaces and supersedes in its entirety the Annex to Executive Order 13288. This new Annex contains a revised list of persons whose property and interests in property are blocked by the President pursuant to section 1(a)(i) of the order, including key government and party officials and their family members.

The new order will provide needed flexibility as conditions in Zimbabwe evolve, allowing my Administration to more effectively utilize targeted sanctions to promote positive democratic change in Zimbabwe.

I am enclosing a copy of the Executive Order I have issued.

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 November 23. The Executive order of November 22 is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

Message on the Second Anniversary of the Rose Revolution
November 23, 2005

I send greetings to all those commemorating the second anniversary of the Rose Revolution.

Freedom is the longing of the soul and the permanent hope of mankind. Two years ago, the desire for liberty inspired thousands of Georgian citizens to reclaim their

sovereignty and complete the journey to independence first begun in 1989 during the last days of the Soviet empire. These brave men and women, armed only with roses and the power of their convictions, stood up to claim liberty in their own country. Their actions began the Rose Revolution, inspiring those who believe in freedom and democratic reform around the world. In the two years since that peaceful revolution, the Georgian people have continued their contributions to freedom's cause and made significant progress in building a vibrant democracy.

The United States is committed to supporting democracy and the rule of law in Georgia and around the globe. I join all Americans in honoring the valiant Georgians who stood up against oppression and defended the right of all to be free. Your courage is an inspiration to those aspiring for freedom in their own land.

Laura and I send our best wishes on this special occasion.

GEORGE W. BUSH

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

The President's Radio Address
November 26, 2005

Good morning. This week we gather with our loved ones to give thanks for the many blessings in our lives. Each family has its own traditions, yet we are united as a nation in setting aside a day of gratitude. We are thankful for our family and friends who fill our lives with joy and love. We are thankful for the abundance of this prosperous land. We are thankful for the freedom that makes possible the enjoyment of all these gifts. And we acknowledge with humility that all these blessings and life itself come from Almighty God.

On Thanksgiving and throughout the year, we are grateful to the men and women of our Armed Forces for securing the peace in these dangerous times. Many members of our Armed Forces are observing this holiday in places far from home. They are serving with courage and skill in Iraq, Afghanistan, and elsewhere to defend our freedom and extend the blessings of freedom to others. In the past year, these brave Americans have continued to fight terrorists abroad so we do not have to face them here at home. And they have helped the people of Iraq and Afghanistan hold historic and successful elections. They are America's finest, and we thank them today and every day for their service and sacrifice.

This week we also extend our gratitude to our military families who are making great sacrifices to advance freedom's cause. Many of our service men and women have endured long deployments and separations from home. Many of those they leave behind must deal with the burden of raising families while praying for the safe return of their loved ones. All Americans honor and appreciate the commitment and sacrifice of our military families.

We think especially this week of those military families who are mourning the loss of loved ones. Every person who dies in the line of duty commands the eternal gratitude of the American people. The military families who mourn the fallen can know that America will not forget their sacrifice, and they can know that we will honor that sacrifice by completing the noble mission for which their loved ones gave their lives.

The Thanksgiving holiday reminds us that, "To whom much is given, from him much will be required." As we count our blessings, we are mindful of the need to

share our blessings and gifts with others, and America is moved to compassionate action. This compassionate spirit was seen again this year, when Americans rallied to help their neighbors in need after the destruction caused by Hurricanes Katrina and Rita. We pray for continued strength as we rebuild these communities and return hope to our fellow citizens.

The universal call to love a neighbor also extends beyond our shores, moving us to help people in other lands. Our Nation has begun to help the millions of people in Pakistan, India, and Afghanistan who are suffering after last month's devastating earthquake in South Asia. I urge you to visit the web site of the South Asia Earthquake Relief Fund at southasiaearthquakerelief.org to find out how you can help. And to help others in need in your hometown, across America, and around the world, please visit the USA Freedom Corps web site at usafreedomcorps.gov.

This week of Thanksgiving, we ask that God continue to bless our families and our Nation. Laura and I wish you all a happy and safe Thanksgiving weekend.

Thank you for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 8:20 a.m. on November 23 at the Bush Ranch in Crawford, TX, for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on November 26. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on November 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 Border Security and Immigration Reform in Tucson, Arizona
November 28, 2005

Thank you all. Please be seated. Thank you for the warm welcome. It is such a pleasure to be back in Arizona, and it's great to be here in Tucson. Last time I was here, I think there was probably about a 50-degree temperature differential. [*Laughter*] It's an honor to stand here with the men and women of Davis-Monthan Air Force Base. As well, to be here with the men and women of the Customs and Border Protection Agency, and the Immigration and Customs Enforcement Agency as well.

Securing our border is essential to securing the homeland. And I want to thank all of those who are working around the clock to defend our border, to enforce our laws, and to uphold the values of the United States of America. America is grateful to those who are on the frontlines of enforcing the border.

I appreciate so very much the Governor joining us today. Governor, thank you for being here. I'm honored you are here. I appreciate Senator John McCain joining us today, Senator, as well as Senator Jon Kyl. I appreciate three members of the congressional delegation from Arizona—Congressmen Shadegg, Flake, and Franks—for joining us as well. Two members of my Cabinet are here with us, the Attorney General of the United States, Al Gonzales, and the Secretary of the Department of Homeland Security, Mike Chertoff.

I want to thank the United States Attorney from the District of Arizona, Paul Charlton, for joining us today. I appreciate David Aguilar, who is the Chief of the Border Patrol, U.S. Customs and Border Protection of the Department of Homeland Security; Mike Nicely, who is the Chief Patrol Agent, Tucson Sector; Ron Colburn, Chief Patrol Agent, Yuma Sector; Martin

Vaughan, Director of Air Operations. But most of all, I want to thank those who wear the uniform for doing such a fine job. Thank you all. Finally, I want to thank General Schmidt for welcoming me today. He's the Commander of the 12th Air Force, U.S. Southern Command, based right here at this base.

I have a solemn duty, and so do the Members of the United States Congress, to protect our Nation, our Constitution, and our laws. Our border and immigration security officers devote themselves to those same missions every single day.

America has always been a compassionate nation that values the newcomer and takes great pride in our immigrant heritage. Yet we're also a nation built on the rule of law, and those who enter the country illegally violate the law. The American people should not have to choose between a welcoming society and a lawful society. We can have both at the same time. And to keep the promise of America, we will enforce the laws of our country.

As a former Governor, I know that enforcing the law and the border is especially important to the communities along the border. Illegal immigration puts pressure on our schools and hospitals; I understand that. I understand it strains the resources needed for law enforcement and emergency services. And the vicious human strugglers—smugglers and gangs that bring illegal immigrants across the border also bring crime to our neighborhoods and danger to the highways. Illegal immigration is a serious challenge, and our responsibility is clear: We are going to protect the border.

Since I've taken office, we've increased funding for border security by 60 percent. Our border agents have used that funding to apprehend and send home more than 4.5 million people coming into our country illegally, including more than 350,000 with criminal records. Our customs and border protection agents can be proud of the work that you're doing. You're taking control of this border. And we have more work to do, and that's what I want to talk to you about today. We're going to build on the progress we have made.

We have a comprehensive strategy to reform our immigration system. We're going to secure the border by catching those who enter illegally and hardening the border to prevent illegal crossings. We're going to strengthen enforcement of our immigration laws within our country. And together with Congress, we're going to create a temporary-worker program that will take pressure off the border, bring workers from out of the shadows, and reject amnesty.

Our strategy for comprehensive immigration reforms begins by securing the border. Now, let me talk to you about a three-part plan. The first part of the plan is to promptly return every illegal entrant we catch at the border, with no exceptions. More than 85 percent of the illegal immigrants we catch are from Mexico, and most of them are escorted back across the border within 24 hours.

To prevent them from trying to cross again, we've launched an interesting program, an innovative approach called interior repatriation. Under this program, many Mexicans caught at the border illegally are flown back to Mexico and then bused to their hometowns in the interior part of the country. By returning these illegal immigrants to their hometowns far from the border, we make it more difficult for them to attempt to cross again. Interior repatriation is showing promise in breaking the cycle of illegal immigration.

In a pilot program focused on the west Arizona desert, nearly 35,000 illegal immigrants were returned to Mexico through interior repatriation. Last year, only about 8 percent of them were caught trying to cross the border again, a much lower rate than we find among illegal immigrants who are escorted directly across the border. We're going to expand interior repatriation. We want to make it clear that when people violate immigration laws, they're going to

be sent home, and they need to stay at home.

We face a different set of challenges with non-Mexicans that we—who we catch crossing the border illegally. When non-Mexican illegal immigrants are apprehended, they are initially detained. The problem is that our detention facilities don't have enough beds. And so, about four of every five non-Mexican illegal immigrants we catch are released in society and asked to return for a court date. When the date arrives, about 75 percent of those released don't show up to the court. As a result, last year only 30,000 of the 160,000 non-Mexicans caught coming across our Southwest border were sent home.

This practice of catch-and-release has been the Government's policy for decades. It is an unwise policy, and we're going to end it. To help end catch-and-release, we need to increase the capacity in our detention facilities. Last month at the White House, I signed legislation supported by the members of the Arizona delegation that will increase the number of beds in our detention facilities. We're also working to process illegal immigrants through the system more quickly, so we can return them home faster and free up bed space for others.

One of the most effective tools we have in this effort is a process called expedited removal. Under expedited removal, non-Mexicans are detained and placed into streamlined proceedings. It allows us to deport them at an average of 32 days, almost three times faster than usual. In other words, we're cutting through the bureaucracy. Last year, we used expedited removal to deport more than 20,000 non-Mexicans caught entering this country illegally between Tucson and Laredo. This program is so successful that the Secretary has expanded it all up and down the border. This is a straightforward idea. It says, when an illegal immigrant knows they'll be caught and sent home, they're less likely to come to the country. That's the message we're trying to send with expedited removal.

We're also pursuing other commonsense steps to accelerate the deportation process. We're pressing foreign governments to take their citizens back promptly. We're streamlining the paperwork, and we're increasing the number of flights carrying illegal immigrants home. We recently tested the effectiveness of these steps with Brazilian illegal immigrants caught along the Rio Grande Valley of the Texas border. The effort was called Operation Texas Hold 'Em. [*Laughter*] It delivered impressive results. Thanks to our actions, Brazilian illegal immigration dropped by 90 percent in the Rio Grande Valley and by 60—50 percent across the border as a whole. With all these steps, we're delivering justice more effectively, and we're changing the policy from catch-and-release to the policy of catch-and-return.

The second part of our plan is to strengthen border—to strengthen border enforcement is to correct weak and unnecessary provisions in our immigration laws. Under current law, the Federal Government is required to release people caught crossing our border illegally if their home countries do not take them back in a set period of time. That law doesn't work when it comes time to enforcing the border, and it needs to be changed. Those we were forced to release have included murderers, rapists, child molesters, and other violent criminals. This undermines our border security. It undermines the work these good folks are doing. And the United States Congress needs to pass legislation to end these senseless rules.

We need to address the cycle of endless litigation that clogs our immigration courts and delays justice for immigrants. Some Federal courts are now burdened with more than six times as many immigration appeals as they had just a few years ago. A panel of the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals in San Francisco declared that illegal immigrants have a right to relitigate before

an immigration court as many times as they want. This decision obviously would encourage illegal immigrants who have been deported to sneak back into the country to re-argue their case. Congress needs to put an end to this cycle of needless litigation and deliver reforms necessary to help us secure this border.

The third part of our plan to strengthen border enforcement is to stop people from crossing the border illegally in the first place. And we're increasing manpower; we're increasing technology and infrastructure across this border. We're integrating these resources in ways we have never done before.

Since 2001, we've hired 1,900 new Border Patrol agents. I just signed a bill last month that will enable us to add another 1,000 Border Patrol agents. When we complete these hires, we will have enlarged the Border Patrol by about 3,000 agents, from 9,500 the year I took office to 12,500 next year. This is an increase of more than 30 percent, and most of the new agents will be assigned right here in the State of Arizona.

And to help the agents, we're deploying technologies. Listen, technology can help an individual agent have broader reach and more effectiveness. When agents can take advantage of cutting-edge equipment like overhead surveillance drones and infrared cameras, they can do a better job for all of us.

In Tucson, agents on the ground are directing unmanned aerial technology in the sky, and they're acting rapidly on illegal immigration or illegal activities they may see from the drones. In the months since these unmanned flights began, agents have intercepted a lot of drugs on the border that otherwise—and people—that otherwise might have made it through.

The legislation I signed last month provides $139 million to further upgrade the technology and bring a more unified, systematic approach to border enforcement. Again, I want to thank the Members of the Congress.

In some places, the most effective way to secure the border is to construct physical barriers to entry. The legislation I signed last month includes $70 million to install and improve protective infrastructure across this border. In rural areas, we're funding the construction of new patrol roads to give our agents better access to the border and new vehicle barriers to keep illegal immigrants from driving across the border.

In urban areas, we're expanding fencing to shut down access to human smuggling corridors. Secretary Chertoff recently used authority granted by the Congress to order the completion of a 14-mile barrier near San Diego that had been held up because of lawsuits. By overcoming endless litigation to finish this vital project, we're helping our border agents do their job and making people who live close to the border more secure.

Our actions to integrate manpower, technology, and infrastructure are getting results. And one of the best examples of success is the Arizona Border Control Initiative, which the Government launched in 2004. In the first year of this initiative—now, listen to this, listen how hard these people are working here—agents in Arizona apprehended nearly 500,000 illegal immigrants, a 42-percent increase over the previous year. We've captured a half-million pounds of marijuana, prosecuted more than 400 people suspected of human smuggling, and seized more than $7 million in cash. You've got some good folks here working hard to do their job, and I appreciate it very much.

As we work to secure the border, comprehensive immigration reform also requires us to improve enforcement of our laws in the interior of the country. Catching and deporting illegal immigrants along the border is only part of the responsibility. America's immigration laws apply across all of America, and we will enforce those laws

throughout our land. Better interior enforcement begins with better worksite enforcement. American businesses have an obligation to abide by the law, and our Government has the responsibility to help them do so.

Enforcing our immigration laws in the interior of the country requires a sustained commitment of resources. Since I took office, we've increased funding for immigration enforcement by 44 percent. We've increased the number of immigration and customs investigators by 14 percent since 2001. And those good folks are working hard too. Last year, the—this year, Federal agents completed what they called Operation Rollback. It's the largest worksite enforcement case in American history. This operation resulted in the arrest of hundreds of illegal immigrants, criminal convictions against a dozen employers, and a multimillion dollar payment from one of America's largest corporations.

Our skilled immigration security officers are also going against some of the most dangerous people in our society—smugglers, terrorists, gang members, and human traffickers. In Arizona, we have prosecuted more than 2,300 smugglers bringing drugs, guns, and illegal immigrants across the border. As a part of Operation Community Shield, Federal agents have arrested nearly 1,400 gang members who were here illegally, including hundreds of members of the violent Latin American gangs like MS–13.

Since the Department of Homeland Security was created, agents have apprehended nearly 27,000 illegal immigrant fugitives. Thanks to our determined personnel, society is safer. But we've got more work to do. The legislation I signed last month more than doubled the resources dedicated to interior enforcement. We understand that border security and interior enforcement go hand in hand. We will increase the number of immigration enforcement agents and criminal investigators.

We're confronting the problem of document fraud as well. When illegal workers try to pass off sophisticated forgeries as employment documents, even the most diligent businesses find it difficult to tell what's real and what's fake. Businessowners shouldn't have to act like detectives to verify the legal status of their workers. So my administration has expanded a program called Basic Pilot. This program gives businesses access to an automated system that rapidly screens the employment eligibility of new hire against Federal records. Basic Pilot was available in only six States 5 years ago; now this program is available nationwide. We'll continue to work to stop document fraud to make it easier for America's businesses to comply with our immigration laws.

As we enforce our immigration laws, comprehensive immigration reform also requires us to improve those laws by creating a new temporary-worker program. This program would create a legal way to match willing foreign workers with willing American employers to fill jobs that Americans will not do. Workers would be able to register for legal status for a fixed period of time and then be required to go home. This program would help meet the demands of a growing economy, and it would allow honest workers to provide for their families while respecting the law.

This plan would also help us relieve pressure on the border. By creating a legal channel for those who enter America to do an honest day's labor, we would reduce the number of workers trying to sneak across the border. This would free up law enforcement officials to focus on criminals, drug dealers, terrorists, and others that mean to harm us. Our plan would create a tamper-proof identification card for the temporary legal worker, which, of course, would improve worksite enforcement.

Listen, there's a lot of opinions on this proposal. I understand that, but people in this debate must recognize that we will not

be able to effectively enforce our immigration laws until we create a temporary-worker program. The program that I proposed would not create an automatic path to citizenship, it wouldn't provide for amnesty. I oppose amnesty. Rewarding those who have broken the law would encourage others to break the law and keep pressure on our border.

A temporary-worker program, by contrast, would decrease pressure on the border. I support the number of—increasing the number of annual green cards that can lead to citizenship. But for the sake of justice and for the sake of border security, I'm not going to sign an immigration bill that includes amnesty.

I look forward to continue working with the United States Congress on comprehensive immigration reform. In the House of Representatives, your Arizona Congressmen are building strong support for border enforcement among their colleagues. Judiciary Committee Chairman Sensenbrenner and Homeland Security Chairman King are moving bills that include tough provisions to help secure this border. The House plans to vote on this legislation soon; I urge them to pass a good bill.

The Senate is continuing to work on border legislation as well. This legislation improves border security and toughens interior enforcement and creates a temporary-worker program. Senators McCain and Kyl have taken the lead. It's two good men taking the lead, by the way. I'm confident something is going to get done that people of Arizona will like, with these two Senators in the lead.

Majority Leader Frist and Judiciary Committee Chairman Specter said they're going to take action in early 2006. See, we have a chance to move beyond the old and tired choices of the immigration debate and come together on a strategy to enforce our laws, secure our country, and uphold our deepest values.

We made good progress, but you know like I know, there's a lot more to be done. And we've got to continue to work together to get that done, and I'm optimistic that Congress will rise to the occasion. By passing comprehensive immigration reform, we will add to this country's security, to our prosperity, and to justice.

Our Nation has been strengthened by generations of immigrants who became Americans through patience and hard work and assimilation. In this new century, we must continue to welcome immigrants and to set high standards for those who follow the laws to become a part of our country. Every new citizen of the United States has an obligation to learn our customs and values, including liberty and civic responsibility, equality under God and tolerance for others, and the English language. We will continue to pursue policies that encourage ownership, excellence in education, and give all our citizens a chance to realize the American Dream.

I appreciate once again being here with the Border and Immigration Security officers who have volunteered for a difficult and urgent assignment. I appreciate their courage. By defending our border, you're defending our liberty and our citizens and our way of life. I'm proud to stand with you today, and the American people stand with you as well. May God bless you all, and may God continue to bless our country.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:40 p.m. at Davis-Monthan Air Force Base. In his remarks, he referred to Gov. Janet Napolitano of Arizona. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of these remarks.

Remarks at a Dinner for Senator Jon Kyl in Phoenix, Arizona
November 28, 2005

Thanks for the warm welcome. It's really good to be here. I'm here because I strongly believe Jon Kyl needs to be reelected to the United States Senate.

I'm here because I believe that when you find somebody who's got the utmost of integrity and is willing to work hard, that you ought to support him. Jon Kyl is highly respected. Jon Kyl is a leader. Jon Kyl has got the experience necessary to represent the people of Arizona. The people of this good State need to send Jon Kyl back to the United States Senate.

And I appreciate you supporting him. I particularly want to thank the organizers of this event. It's a big event, by the way. [*Laughter*] Thanks for working over Thanksgiving to make this such a successful show of support for Jon Kyl, but it wouldn't be successful if it wasn't for the nature of the man that you're supporting. You've seen him. You know him. You know he loves the people of Arizona.

McCain was kind of teasing him about the water issue, but it's a serious business to get it done, and it took somebody who knows his way around Washington, DC, to get the job done. That's what you want in a Senator; you want somebody who can go to Washington and represent the people of Arizona, from this State. You want somebody who doesn't fumble around and kind of preen for the cameras, but somebody who is effective. Jon Kyl is an effective United States Senator, and the people of this State need to send him back to Washington, DC.

He also married well. [*Laughter*] And so did I. Laura sends her love to Jon and Caryll. Plus, I had the privilege of driving in the limousine with Arlene Kyl, Mom. And I want you to know that Jon Kyl, United States Senator from Arizona, still listens to his mother. [*Laughter*] That's a pretty good sign, isn't it?

I want to thank Senator John McCain for his strong leadership in the United States Senate as well. He's a good man, a man of strong character and—[*applause*]. I appreciate the United States Congressmen who have joined us here today, Congressmen Hayworth and Shadegg and Flake. I'm—and Trent Franks. I enjoy working with these gentlemen. They care a lot about our Nation, and they care a lot about the State of Arizona, and they're doing a fine job in the House of Representatives. We're proud you all are here, and thanks for coming.

Most of all, I want to thank you all for joining to help Jon. You know, you can't win unless you got a base of support. You can't—listen, I, fortunately, had my full of campaigns, but there's nothing like being—walking into a room full of enthusiastic supporters to give you that spirit, to kind of put that wind behind your back. And that's what you're doing for Jon Kyl.

It's not easy to be in the United States Senate in this day and age. It's not easy to represent an important State like Arizona when you have to travel as far as you have to do to get here. And yet, this guy does a lot. He comes back and forth because he cares deeply. And I want to thank you all for standing squarely with him. There's nothing better than somebody who's seeking election than to be able to walk into a ballroom this full of enthusiastic people saying to Jon Kyl loud and clear, "We're not only going to give of our money; we're going to give of our time to get you reelected to the United States Senate."

Look, I don't know how many U.S. Senators there are that like NASCAR. [*Laughter*] I view that as a pretty good sign, to have a United States Senator who follows NASCAR. It means he's down to earth. He doesn't walk around Washington with a lot of airs like some of them do. He's

a commonsense man who understands the values of the people. And that's why I'm proud that he invited me to come, and by the way, it took me no time to say yes.

These are serious times in which we live, and it requires serious, experienced people to deal with the problems that we're confronted with. And the biggest problem we got is, we're still at war. I wish I could report to you we weren't at war, but there's an enemy that still lurks that wants to do harm to the United States of America. And they want to do us harm because we stand squarely for freedom and democracy, and we're not going to change. You see, they can't stand the fact that we allow people to worship freely, or to speak their mind in the public square, or to print articles the way they want to print them in America. They have a different view of the world. They've got this vision of darkness that stifles dissent and stifles the freedoms that many of us take for granted.

They have declared their ambitions loud and clear. Zawahiri, the number-two man in the Al Qaida operation, has made it abundantly clear that they must drive America out of the Middle East, must drive us into an isolated state so that they can expand their totalitarian vision "from Spain to Indonesia"—his words, not mine.

They not only talk war, they declared war by attacking us on September the 11th, 2001, and this country must never forget the lessons. We cannot take our security for granted, and we must stay on the offensive against these killers and bring them to justice before they hurt the American people again. And that's what Senator Jon Kyl clearly understands, and that's another reason why the people of Arizona need to put him back in the United States Senate.

The enemy has made Iraq a central front in this war on terror, so we must take it seriously. We're going to succeed in Iraq. We're going to succeed in Iraq because our vision and the vision of those in Iraq who believe in democracy is positive and hopeful, as opposed to the vision of the suiciders and killers of the innocent. We're going to succeed in Iraq because we've got a plan that will help the Iraqis not only develop a democracy but a security force.

Listen, the Iraqis want to defend themselves. They want to be capable of fighting off an enemy, and our job is to make sure they are capable. We will stay until the job is done, not a day longer. We will get the job done in Iraq.

And Jon Kyl understands that in this war on terror, it's important to have Members of the United States Senate who understand mixed messages and who understand that when we've got a kid in harm's way, that soldier deserves all the very best that the Federal Government can give him in terms of equipment and training and support.

Jon Kyl has been a stalwart in this war on terror, and so has John McCain. And so have members of the United States congressional district. And I'm proud to fight this war side by side with them.

Jon Kyl also understands what history has taught us, that democracies bring the peace we all want; that democracies don't fight with their neighbors; that democracies lay this foundation for a better future. He understands the lessons of history that I understand.

You know, I just recently came off a trip to the Far East. By the way, representing the United States of America around the world is one of the great experiences of the Presidency. And it struck me that I was in a region of the world where there—where wars had started. You know, my dad and Senator McCain's relatives, I'm sure many of your relatives, fought the Japanese. They were our sworn enemy. And yet, there I was in Kyoto, Japan, sitting with my friend Prime Minister Koizumi talking about the peace, talking about what we can do in the Far East to work together to keep the peace, and what we can do in the Middle East to help rid that region of resentment and hatred, to help change

the breeding grounds for the recruitment of suiciders into a hopeful place. Isn't that amazing? Think about that. Who would have thought 50 years ago or 60 years ago, a President of the United States could have stood here in Phoenix, Arizona, and said he sat down at the table with the Prime Minister of Japan talking about the peace. Nobody would have thought that way then.

So what happened? Democracy prevailed. Japanese-style democracy came into being, and it yielded an ally. And what we're doing today in Iraq and elsewhere in the broader Middle East is laying that same foundation for peace. Someday, an American President is going to look back and say, "Fifty years ago, fortunately we had leaders in the United States Senate like Jon Kyl who understood that by spreading democracy in the broader Middle East, they were laying the foundations of peace for generations to come." Jon Kyl needs to go back to the United States Senate.

I want to talk about three other things right quick. One, you might remember that right after I came into office, this Nation had to deal with tough economic times. And I proposed and many in the United States Congress supported the idea of making sure we got out of the recession as quickly as possible by letting people keep more of their own money. We believe strongly that if a small-business person has more money to invest, it means more jobs are likely to be created. We believe strongly that if there's reduction in capital gains and dividend taxes, people are more likely to make investments. We believe the death tax is a bad tax. Jon Kyl supported the tax cuts, and he, like me, believes for the sake of economic vitality, we need to make the tax cuts permanent.

And at the same time, he understands we can't waste your money. There's no tougher watchdog for the people's money than Jon Kyl. If people of Arizona want to make sure that the Federal Government doesn't waste your taxpayers' money, you need to send him back to the United States Senate. He's doing a great job when it comes to fiscal sanity in the Halls of the United States Senate.

As Senator McCain mentioned today, the congressional delegation and myself went down to Tucson to talk about immigration. Jon Kyl understands the issue. He understands that we need to secure the border of the United States and is willing to work with the administration to do that. He's been a leader in increasing the number of Border Patrol agents, particularly those here in the State of Arizona. He understands the program of catch-and-release doesn't work, and so he is willing to help fund additional beds to detain non-Mexican illegal immigrants. He understands that we need to have strong worksite enforcement in the United States if we're going to have an immigration plan work.

He understands that border security also means a rational—a temporary-worker plan, so our Border Patrol agents aren't chasing people coming to work; they're chasing criminals and drug lords. Jon Kyl understands clearly that the role of the Federal Government is to enforce the border of the United States of America, which is precisely what we're going to do.

Finally, I want to talk about judges. I remember campaigning here in Arizona—I remember debating here in Arizona—and I remember saying a lot of times in 2000 and 2004, "If you put me in office, I will nominate people for the bench who will strictly interpret the Constitution and not try to become a part of the legislative branch of Government." And those are the kind of judges I put up. And I can't thank Jon Kyl enough for making sure the judges I nominate get a fair hearing and an up-or-down vote on the floor of the United States Senate.

Judge Roberts is going to make a great Chief of the Supreme Court, and Sam Alito is going to make a really fine replacement for Arizonan Sandra Day O'Connor. And Jon Kyl is going to be one of the leaders

in making sure that Sam Alito gets confirmed in the United States Senate. And if the people of this State want to make sure that we've got judges on the bench who strictly interpret the Constitution and not legislate from the bench, they need to return Jon Kyl to the United States Senate.

I think you're getting the picture about where my position is on Kyl. I can't thank you enough for letting me come by to put my two cents in for Jon. He is—he's a classy guy. He is really the kind of person that you would hope would be serving you. You don't have to worry about him not telling the truth or doing something that would make you ashamed. He's not that kind of fellow. He's as—his integrity is as strong as it gets. And it seems like to me that when you've got an experienced hand, somebody who knows what he's doing in Washington, DC, somebody who can get the job done for people, somebody who brings integrity and decency to the office, that there's only one logical conclusion. For the sake of the State and for the sake of the country, Jon Kyl needs to be reelected to the United States Senate.

Thanks for coming tonight. May God bless you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 5:23 p.m. at the Arizona Biltmore Resort and Spa. In his remarks, he referred to Caryll Kyl, wife of Jon Kyl; Ayman Al-Zawahiri, founder of the Egyptian Islamic Jihad and senior Al Qaida associate; and Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi of Japan.

Remarks Following a Tour of the Border and an Exchange With Reporters Near El Paso, Texas

November 29, 2005

First of all, it's good to be back in El Paso. I spent a lot of quality time in this part of the world when I was the Governor, and I appreciate, by the way, the Governor standing with me here. I don't know if you remember or not, but Laura's mother was raised here, so El Paso has always had a special spot in our heart.

I want to thank the people that are working the border. We have a responsibility in the Government to enforce our border. It's important for national security. It's important for economic security to have a good border security plan. And so the Secretary and I and the Attorney General—secretary of state of Texas; Johnny Sutton, the D.A.; Congressman Mac Conaway—we've just taken a tour of this part of the border. And what should be a lesson is that you've got to adjust your strategy based upon the conditions. This is an urban environment. Right over here is Juarez, and people are able to easily come into the border—into Texas, in this part of—in part of the border.

And so what you're seeing is, you're seeing a combination of fencing, cameras, infrared, and Border Patrol agents all doing their job. What we've done is, we have boosted the amount of money available to our—to enforce this border. We're adding agents. We've added agents since I've become the President. We're adding more agents as a result of the bill I just signed, and we're adding infrastructure to make the city secure as well as the rural parts of our border secure. So step one of a border control strategy is, increase the resources so the people standing behind me are able to do their job.

Step two is when we catch somebody, don't release them. Catch-and-release has been a longstanding policy of the Federal Government, and we're going to change

that. Listen, we've got people risking their lives to do their job here on the border, and there's nothing more dispiriting than to know the person that they have stopped coming into our country illegally is being released back into society. And so we've got a plan for what we call internal repatriation for Mexicans, and we've got a plan for non-Mexican illegal immigrants.

And part of that plan is to increase the number of beds available to detain people caught illegally coming into our country. And the second part is for Congress to change the laws. That will enable us to have—more likely to have expedited removal.

The third aspect of our comprehensive strategy to do our duty and enforce the border is to have a worksite enforcement program. I mean, our employers in America have an obligation not to hire illegal immigrants. Many of those immigrants, by the way, use forged documents. And so we've got a computer system up and running to enable employers to be able to determine whether or not the documents they're being presented are fake or not. We're also increasing the number of agents that will be working in the internal part of the country to find those who've broken the law and bring them to justice.

See, we're a nation of law. We're also a compassionate nation. We've got to treat people with respect and dignity. The third aspect of our policy is this: We need to have a rational temporary-worker plan that is not amnesty. Amnesty would be a mistake. Granting amnesty to the people who have come to our country illegally would invite others to come to our country illegally. On the other hand, a temporary-worker program would take pressure off our border. When you match willing worker with willing employer on a job Americans won't do, with a tamper-proof card that says, "I'm here legally for a temporary basis," it means our Border Patrol agents won't have to chase people coming here illegally to work. They'll be able to chase criminals and drug traffickers and crooks.

What I'm telling you is, we want to make the job of these folks easier. We want to support them. We want to support them with resources. We want to support them with rational policy so that we can say to the American people, "We've done our job, which is enforce this border."

I want to thank you very much for the tour; I want to thank you all for your hard work. You bring great pride to the uniform. I appreciate the risks you take on a daily basis. And with the bill I signed, the appropriations bill I signed, and the bills that are going to be working through the House and the Senate, will make it more likely you'll be able to do your job. So it's an honor to be here on the border, and I want to thank everybody for showing up.

I'll be glad to answer a couple of questions. Patsy [Patricia Wilson, Reuters].

U.S. Troops in Iraq

Q. Sir, with elections coming up next year, how much pressure are you under to reduce the U.S. troop presence in Iraq before the end of 2006?

The President. Our policy—I'm giving a speech tomorrow that outlines the training and the progress we're making in training Iraqis to provide security for their country. And we will make decisions about troop levels based upon the capacity of the Iraqis to take the fight to the enemy. And I will make decisions based upon—the level of troops based upon the recommendations by the commanders on the ground. If they tell me we need more troops, we'll provide more troops. If they tell me we've got sufficient level of troops, that will be the level of troops. If they tell me that the Iraqis are ready to take more and more responsibility and that we'll be able to bring some Americans home, I will do that. It's their recommendation.

Secondly, we want to win. The whole objective is to achieve a victory against the terrorists. The terrorists have made it very

clear that Iraq is a central front on the war on terror. See, they want us to leave before we've achieved our mission. You know why? Because they want a safe haven; they want to be able to plot and plan attacks. This country must never forget the lessons of September the 11th, 2001, and a victory in Iraq will deny the terrorists their stated goal.

Finally, a democracy in Iraq, which is now emerging, will serve as a fantastic example for reformers and others. And as democracy takes hold in the broader Middle East, we can say we have done our duty and laid the foundation of peace for generations to come.

Iraqi Troop Preparedness

Q. Since we know that the preparation of Iraqi troops is a main reason you want to bring U.S. troops home, can you talk about how satisfied you are with the Iraqi troop preparedness?

The President. Look, here's what I'm interested in. I'm interested in winning. I want to defeat the terrorists, and I want our troops to come home. But I don't want them to come home without having achieved victory, and we've got a strategy for victory. And the commanders will make the decision. See, that's what the people want. The people don't want me making decisions based upon politics. They want me to make decisions based upon the recommendation from our generals on the ground, and that's exactly who I'll be listening to.

Now, I know there's a lot of voices in Washington. We've heard some people say, "Pull them out right now." That's a huge mistake. It'd be a terrible mistake. It sends a bad message to our troops, and it sends a bad message to our enemy, and it sends a bad message to the Iraqis.

So my decision will be based upon the capacity of the—the willingness of our commanders to say, "The Iraqis are taking more of the fight and therefore, the conditions are such that we can reduce our troop presence."

U.S. Troops in Iraq

Q. Sir, do you agree with comments by Secretary Rice, who says that U.S. troops may not need to stay at current troop levels that we have there now for much longer?

The President. Well, this is a conditions-based strategy we have. If conditions on the ground are such that we can reduce presence, the commanders will make that recommendation. But victory is the primary objective. We've sacrificed a lot. We've had, you know, some of the finest Americans die in Iraq. And one thing we're not going to do is let them die in vain. We will achieve our objective, which is a stable Iraq, an ally in the war on terror. And we will deny the terrorists safe haven in Iraq. Their stated objective is to use the one tool they've got, which is suicide bombers—beheadings and killings of innocent people—to drive us out of Iraq and the Middle East because they want to have safe haven. They want to spread their totalitarian ideology.

And so our objective in Iraq is to win. And we will make our decisions based upon, primarily, victory, and second, whether or not the commanders think we can achieve that victory and what the—with a certain troop level. And that's what's important for the American people to understand, that one, we're not going to cut and run; two, we'll achieve our objective; and three, the President is going to listen to those who are on the ground who can make the best assessment.

Yes, where are you from?

Border Security

Q. With the El Paso Times, sir, Louie Gilot. Mr. President, what is the security risk on the border as far as homeland security and terrorism?

The President. Look, there is great risk for people who wear the green, and they know that. And the reason there's great

risk is because they don't know whether they're going to encounter some innocent soul just coming to work or somebody trying to smuggle drugs.

On our briefing as we came up and down the—came down the border here, I was told about a recent apprehension made by our Border Patrol agents of people trying to smuggle drugs in. And it's night, you know. And this happened to be in a more rural area, and the chopper had to leave to go refuel. And so we've got people risking their lives out there to stop the trafficking of drugs into our country, and that's dangerous. And so it's dangerous here. I mean, there's no other way to look at it. And that's why these folks need more resources and more agents to help them, and that's what we're providing.

And there is lighting up and down this part of the border. We're going to use drones to be able to help enforce the border in rural Texas and in rural New Mexico and rural Arizona. See, it's one thing to add agents, but if you look at the size of this border, you can't add enough agents. What you've got to do is get technology in the hands of the agents so they can better do their job. Slowly but surely, technology is being employed up and down the border, and that's a key part of our strategy, as well as physical barriers. You see a physical barrier right here. This is good for an urban environment. As you head out into the rural parts of the world, there are other types of physical barriers we can use, such as impediments to vehicular traffic or berming, which is precisely what our strategy is.

We've got a comprehensive strategy that says, "We're going to enforce this border. We're going to prevent people from coming here in the first place. And when we catch people—and, by the way, since 2001, our Border Patrol have apprehended 4.5 million people illegally coming into the country. But we've got to end catch-and-release. In other words, we've got to end this program particularly for non-Mexican, illegal immigrants. This business about catching people and then letting them back out in the society, it's not fair to those who are working hard, and it's not fair to the American people. We're ending the practice.

And then I told you we've got to have better interior enforcement, plus a rational worker plan that is not amnesty. That's a very important part of the plan.

Representative Randy "Duke" Cunningham

Q. Do you have any reaction to the resignation of Congressman Cunningham and the charges that were brought against him?

The President. Any Member of Congress, Republican or Democrat, must take their office seriously and the ethics seriously. The idea of a Congressman taking money is outrageous. And Congressman Cunningham is going to realize that he has broken the law and is going to pay a serious price, which he should.

Terrorist Detention Centers Abroad

Q. Is there going to be investigating the allegations that there are U.S.-run terrorist detention centers abroad? Don't the American people deserve an accounting of why these places exist and what's being done there?

The President. The United States of America does not torture. And that's important for people around the world to understand.

Border Security

Q. Will we ever see a wall here in the border?

The President. You've got a fence here in the border. You're going to have a virtual fence in the border when we bring technology to bear—infrared, cameras, drones. And you've got some of the finest Americans in our country enforcing the border. Ours is a nation of law. People should not be allowed to break the law.

So one of the ways to make sure we have a rational border control policy is to make work legal, not amnesty but work

legal, on a temporary basis. People ought to be given a tamper-proof work card, come here, and do jobs Americans won't do, and then after a set period of time, go home. And that's what we're going to work with Congress about, a comprehensive plan that will make it easier for these good folks to do their job, which is enforce the border of the United States.

Listen, thank you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:41 a.m. at the El Paso sector of the Mexico-U.S. border. In his remarks, he referred to Gov. Rick Perry of Texas; Secretary of Homeland Security Michael Chertoff; and Johnny Sutton, U.S. Attorney for the Western District of Texas. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Remarks at a Luncheon for Representative Marilyn N. Musgrave in Denver, Colorado
November 29, 2005

Thank you all. Thanks for the warm welcome. Thanks for the invitation, Marilyn. I am here because Marilyn Musgrave is a great Congresswoman, and she deserves to be reelected to the United States Congress.

And I want to thank you all for coming to support her. I want to remind you, it's one thing to support a person with your hard-earned wages; it's another thing to support a person with your time and efforts. So when the time comes, I hope you're dialing the phones and knocking on the doors and helping defeat the special interests that are trying to drive her out of office.

I appreciate Marilyn because she's a hard worker. You know, some of them get up to Congress, and they take it easy, take things for granted—not this Congressperson. She's home in her district because she cares about the people of Colorado. I know she cares about the people of Colorado because every time I see her, she says, "I want to remind you about the values that are important in Colorado." [*Laughter*]

She's not only a hard worker; she brings commonsense values to Washington, DC. And that's a town that needs some commonsense values. In order to keep this country safe, in order to keep this country strong, we need people like Marilyn Musgrave in the United States Congress.

By the way, Laura agrees with me. [*Laughter*] I'd like us to hang around for lunch, but I've got to head back to Washington and have dinner with her—and my mother and dad, by the way, who send their love as well to the Congresswoman.

I'm proud to have traveled from the airport not only with your great Governor, Bill Owens—it's great to see you, Governor; thanks for being here—but with Marilyn's husband, Steve. As a matter of fact, I've met so many Musgraves today—[*laughter*]—that if they all lived in the district, it would be a landslide. [*Laughter*] Nothing like somebody in the Congress who loves her family and who understands the importance of family values, and that's Marilyn Musgrave.

Not only do we have the Governor here, we got the Lieutenant Governor, Jane Norton. Thanks for coming, Governor—both Governors. Proud you're here. Mark Hillman, the treasurer, is here; a lot of State and local officials. Thanks for coming. It's good to see my friend the Congressman, Bob Beauprez, and Claudia. Thanks for coming, Mr. Congressman.

I had the privilege of saying hello to former Senator Armstrong and his wife, Ellen. It's good to see the Senator. It looks like he's doing pretty good. Retirement hasn't been all that difficult on him, and nor has it been rough on former Congressman Schaffer as well.

But most of all, I want to thank you all for working hard to get this good person back in Congress. We got a lot to do up there. These are extraordinary times that we live in. We're at war. I wish I could report to the people of Colorado the war was over; it's not. There's an enemy still out there that wants to inflict harm on the United States of America because of what we believe in.

We believe in the freedom of people to worship and speak their mind, the freedom of the press to print what they want. They believe in the opposite. They have a dark vision of the world. They have made their intentions clear. They want to establish a totalitarian empire that stretches from Spain to Indonesia. And one way for them to accomplish their objective is to drive us out of the Middle East, is to cause America to become isolated. It's not going to happen on my watch.

One of the reasons I'm proud to stand here with Marilyn is she understands the stakes as well. It's important to have a—somebody from the United States Congress from that district, from her district, who understands that on September the 11th, 2001, an enemy declared war on the United States of America, and we must do everything in our power to protect the American people.

This is an enemy that has declared their intentions in Iraq. They've got one weapon, by the way. Their ideology is so dark, nobody believes in it except for a handful, but they've got the capacity to kill innocent people and have those images on the TV screens around the world, all attempting to shake our will and to get us to retreat. They have stated openly their desire to do to Iraq what they did to Afghanistan, to convert that country into a safe haven so they can plan, plot, and attack. We will defeat the enemy in Iraq. We will do our job to protect the American people.

The stakes are high, and it's important to have Members of the United States Congress who understand that. Marilyn Musgrave understands that we're in a time of war. And in a time of war, it's important to support those who wear the uniform, the men and women who are courageous enough to volunteer for the United States military. Marilyn is a strong supporter for our troops, and that's important.

Marilyn also understands what I know, is that we've got a strategy for victory in Iraq. On the one hand, we'll help this good country develop into a democracy, and it's happening. Think about what's happened in such a brief period of time. You might compare it with our own history, which was a little rocky getting to our own constitutional process. In 2½ years, that country has gone from a totalitarian dictator, who is an enemy of the United States, to a transitional government to the ratification of a constitution and, in 2 weeks' time, elections to elect a Government to serve the people for 4 years. Democracy is on the march in Iraq.

And at the same time, we're training the Iraqi troops so they can take the fight to the enemy. The Iraqis are becoming more and more capable of doing that which they want to do, which is secure their own country against terrorists and Saddamists. Listen, these people—the mothers in Iraq are like the mothers here in Colorado. They want to raise their child in a free and peaceful society, and they've got citizens willing to sacrifice for that free and peaceful society.

Oh, I know there's some in Washington that have said, "Get out of Iraq now." They're wrong. Precipitous withdrawal of our troops would send the wrong signal to our own troops, send the wrong signal to the enemy, and send the wrong signal to people around the world who watch the

commitment of the United States. We're going to stand squarely with the people of Iraq and help them develop a free society.

Marilyn also understands what I know, is that democracies yield the peace we all want. You know, I just came back from the Far East, had a great trip representing our country there. And it's—and in my time in Kyoto, Japan, it struck me again about how amazing the democratic process can be for laying the foundation for peace. I was there to—as a guest of Prime Minister Koizumi, and we sat around the table talking about helping Iraq develop a democracy, and what do we do about the person in North Korea that is developing a nuclear weapons program, we think, and how do we keep the peace.

Sixty years ago, my dad fought the Japanese. Many of your relatives fought the Japanese as well. They were the sworn enemy of the United States. Yet in the year 2005, the President is sitting down with the Prime Minister talking about making the world a more peaceful place. Something happened, obviously, between when an 18-year-old fighter pilot—Navy fighter pilot, I might add—George H.W. Bush signed up, and his son is the President. What happened was Japan developed a democracy, a Japanese-style democracy, but a democracy.

Democracies make the world more peaceful. Someday, an American President is going to look back at this period of history and say, "Thank goodness the United States of America kept faith in the capacity of democracy to change the world," and be dealing with duly democratic, elected leaders in the Middle East, helping to lay that foundation of peace for generations to come. The stakes are high. It's important to have Members of the United States Congress like Marilyn Musgrave, who understand the fact that we're laying the foundation of peace for generations to come.

I promise not to talk so long the food gets cold. [*Laughter*] But I do appreciate Marilyn's understanding about how our economy works. You know, there are some in Washington that would like to raise your taxes. They believe that raising taxes would be good for the economy. I think that's what they believe, but their logic is backward. Marilyn and I understand if you let people keep more of their own money, it spurs economic growth and vitality. We've come through a lot in this economy. We've been through a recession. We've been through terrorist attacks. We've been through corporate scandals. Yet economic—the economic growth of this Nation is strong and vital. And I believe, and Marilyn believes, one of the main reasons why is because of the tax cuts that we delivered for the American people.

She also understands that the death tax is unfair. We put the death tax on the road to extinction, and we need to make sure it stays extinct, for the good of our farmers and ranchers and small-business owners.

Good thing about Marilyn, she also understands Washington has got to be wise about how we spend your money. We're working on a lean budget up there, and it's good to have strong fiscal conservatives in Washington, DC, to fight off the tendency of Washington to spend too much.

She understands how the economy works. She understands that small businesses create most new jobs. It's important to have somebody from the State of Colorado in that congressional district who stands squarely with the entrepreneurs and small-business people, and that's Marilyn Musgrave.

I look forward to working with her on a rational immigration policy. The United States of America will secure our border. I just signed an appropriations bill which expands the number of Border Patrol agents, which is good. But you can't do that, enforce this border only with agents; you need technology like drones and infrared and cameras. And the bill I signed provides for additional technology to help

these good Border Patrol agents do their job down there.

We're going to stop catch-and-release by expanding the number of detention beds. We got people working hard down there. They're finding people trying to sneak into the country, and sure enough, shortly after they get detained, they're back in society again. And so we're going to increase the amount of detention space and work on expedited removal. We're also going to do a better job of enforcing worksite rules here in the United States of America.

Finally, I feel strongly that in order to have a good and secure border, we got to differentiate between those who are here to work and those who are here to bring criminal—to provide—to do criminal activities. Listen, we got people coming into this country to do the jobs Americans won't do. It seems like to me it makes sense to have a willing worker be able to work with a willing employer on a temporary basis.

I stand strongly against amnesty. Amnesty sends the wrong message. Amnesty would say to other illegal aliens, "Come, and you can come into America and get citizenship automatically." No, I'm for a bill that strengthens our border by providing people with a tamper-proof identity card to let them work in America for jobs Americans won't do, on a temporary basis, and then go back to their country. And I'm looking forward to working with Marilyn on rational border control policy, and I think we can get something done.

I'm also proud of the fact that she stands up for values that she thinks important. It's really important for the United States of America to promote a culture of life, to be a welcoming society, to recognize the value of each person. Marilyn is a strong supporter of developing a culture of life. And she's a strong supporter of the sanctity of marriage. We supported a constitutional amendment to make sure that activist judges do not redefine traditional marriage. And I'm proud of your support of that important piece of legislation, Marilyn. And the people of this district ought to send her back to Washington, DC, because she shares the same values as most people in Colorado.

So, in summary, send her back. [*Laughter*] She's doing a fine job. You know, when you find somebody who's honest and upright, somebody who speaks her mind, somebody who's willing to take a tough position regardless of all the noise around, seems like to me that it makes a lot of sense to keep her in the United States Congress. I'm proud to be here today to support a good person, a good family person, good God-fearing person, somebody who is doing a fine job for the people of Colorado, and somebody who will do—continue to do a great job for the people of Colorado.

Thanks for letting me come by to say hello. Marilyn, I'm proud to be on your side. God bless you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:24 p.m. at the Comfort Inn Downtown. In his remarks, he referred to Gov. Bill Owens, Lt. Gov. Jane E. Norton, and State Treasurer Mark Hillman of Colorado; Claudia Beauprez, wife of Representative Bob Beauprez of Colorado; former Senator William L. Armstrong of Colorado and his wife, Ellen; former Representative Robert W. Schaffer of Colorado; former President Saddam Hussein of Iraq; and Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi of Japan.

Remarks on the War on Terror in Annapolis, Maryland
November 30, 2005

Thank you. Please be seated. Please be seated. Thanks for the warm welcome. It's good to be back at the Naval Academy. I'm pleased to provide a convenient excuse for you to miss class.

This is the first year that every class of Midshipmen at this Academy arrived after the attacks of September the 11th, 2001. Each of you has volunteered to wear our Nation's uniform in a time of war, knowing all the risks and dangers that accompany military service. Our citizens are grateful for your devotion of duty, and America is proud of the men and women at the U.S. Naval Academy.

I thank Admiral Rempt for his invitation to come and give this speech. I appreciate Admiral Mike Mullen. I'm traveling today with a man who's done a fine job as the Secretary of Defense, Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld—Navy Aviator Don Rumsfeld. I'm proud that the Governor of the great State of Maryland, Bob Ehrlich, and his wife, Kendel, is with us. Thanks for being here, Governor.

So appreciate that Members of the United States Congress have joined us, starting with the chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee, Senator John Warner of the State of Virginia—former Secretary of the United States Navy, I might add. Chairman of the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence, Congressman Pete Hoekstra, from the State of Arizona, Congressman John Shadegg, and from the State of Indiana, Congressman Mike Pence, I'm honored you all came. Thanks for being here.

Appreciate the mayor of the city of Annapolis, Mayor Ellen Moyer, joining us. I want to thank all the State and local officials. I want to thank the faculty members here. Thank you all for letting me come by.

Six months ago, I came here to address the graduating class of 2005. I spoke to them about the importance of their service in the first war of the 21st century, the global war on terror. I told the class of 2005 that 4 years at this Academy had prepared them morally, mentally, and physically for the challenges ahead. And now they're meeting those challenges as officers of the United States Navy and Marine Corps.

Some of your former classmates are training with Navy SEAL teams that will storm terrorist safe houses in lightning raids. Others are preparing to lead Marine rifle platoons that will hunt the enemy in the mountains of Afghanistan and the streets of Iraqi cities. Others are training as naval aviators who will fly combat missions over the skies of Afghanistan and Iraq and elsewhere. Still others are training as sailors and submariners who will deliver the combat power of the United States to the farthest regions of the world and deliver compassionate assistance to those suffering from natural disasters. Whatever their chosen mission, every graduate of the class of 2005 is bringing honor to the uniform and helping us bring victory in the war on terror.

In the years ahead, you'll join them in the fight. Your service is needed because our Nation is engaged in a war that is being fought on many fronts, from the streets of Western cities to the mountains of Afghanistan, the islands of Southeast Asia, and the Horn of Africa. This war is going to take many turns, and the enemy must be defeated on every battlefield. Yet the terrorists have made it clear that Iraq is the central front in their war against humanity, and so we must recognize Iraq as the central front in the war on terror.

As we fight the enemy in Iraq, every man and woman who volunteers to defend

our Nation deserves an unwavering commitment to the mission and a clear strategy for victory. A clear strategy begins with a clear understanding of the enemy we face. The enemy in Iraq is a combination of rejectionists, Saddamists, and terrorists. The rejectionists are by far the largest group. These are ordinary Iraqis, mostly Sunni Arabs, who miss the privileged status they had under the regime of Saddam Hussein, and they reject an Iraq in which they're no longer the dominant group.

Not all Sunnis fall into the rejectionist camp. Of those that do, most are not actively fighting us, but some give aid and comfort to the enemy. Many Sunnis boycotted the January elections, yet as democracy takes hold in Iraq, they are recognizing that opting out of the democratic process has hurt their interests. And today, those who advocate violent opposition are being increasingly isolated by Sunnis who choose peaceful participation in the democratic process. Sunnis voted in the recent constitutional referendum in large numbers, and Sunni coalitions have formed to compete in next month's elections—or this month's elections. We believe that over time, most rejectionists will be persuaded to support a democratic Iraq led by a Federal Government that is a strong enough Government to protect minority rights.

The second group that makes up the enemy in Iraq is smaller but more determined. It contains former regime loyalists who held positions of power under Saddam Hussein, people who still harbor dreams of returning to power. These hardcore Saddamists are trying to foment antidemocratic sentiment amongst the larger Sunni community. They lack popular support and therefore cannot stop Iraq's democratic progress. And over time, they can be marginalized and defeated by the Iraqi people and the security forces of a free Iraq.

The third group is the smallest but the most lethal, the terrorists affiliated with or inspired by Al Qaida. Many are foreigners who are coming to fight freedom's progress in Iraq. This group includes terrorists from Saudi Arabia and Syria and Iran and Egypt and Sudan and Yemen and Libya and other countries. Our commanders believe they're responsible for most of the suicide bombings and the beheadings and the other atrocities we see on our television.

They're led by a brutal terrorist named Zarqawi, Al Qaida's chief of operations in Iraq, who has pledged his allegiance to Usama bin Laden. Their objective is to drive the United States and coalition forces out of Iraq, and to use the vacuum that would be created by an American retreat to gain control of the country. They would then use Iraq as a base from which to launch attacks against America and overthrow moderate governments in the Middle East and try to establish a totalitarian Islamic empire that reaches from Indonesia to Spain. That's their stated objective. That's what their leadership has said.

These terrorists have nothing to offer the Iraqi people. All they have is the capacity and the willingness to kill the innocent and create chaos for the cameras. They are trying to shake our will to achieve their stated objectives. They will fail. America's will is strong, and they will fail because the power—because the will to power is no match for the universal desire to live in liberty.

The terrorists in Iraq share the same ideology as the terrorists who struck the United States on September the 11th. Those terrorists share the same ideology with those who blew up commuters in London and Madrid, murdered tourists in Bali, workers in Riyadh, and guests at a wedding in Amman, Jordan. Just last week, they massacred Iraqi children and their parents at a toy giveaway outside an Iraqi hospital.

This is an enemy without conscience, and they cannot be appeased. If we're not fighting and destroying this enemy in Iraq, they would not be idle. They would be plotting and killing Americans across the world and within our own borders. By fighting these terrorists in Iraq, Americans in uniform are

defeating a direct threat to the American people. Against this adversary, there is only one effective response: We will never back down; we will never give in; and we will never accept anything less than complete victory.

To achieve victory over such enemies, we are pursuing a comprehensive strategy in Iraq. Americans should have a clear understanding of this strategy—how we look at the war, how we see the enemy, how we define victory, and what we're doing to achieve it. So today we're releasing a document called the "National Strategy for Victory in Iraq." This is an unclassified version of the strategy we've been pursuing in Iraq, and it is posted on the White House web site, whitehouse.gov. I urge all Americans to read it.

Our strategy in Iraq has three elements. On the political side, we know that free societies are peaceful societies, so we're helping the Iraqis build a free society with inclusive democratic institutions that will protect the interests of all Iraqis. We're working with the Iraqis to help them engage those who can be persuaded to join the new Iraq and to marginalize those who never will. On the security side, coalition and Iraqi security forces are on the offensive against the enemy, cleaning out areas controlled by the terrorists and Saddam loyalists, leaving Iraqi forces to hold territory taken from the enemy, and following up with targeted reconstruction to help Iraqis rebuild their lives.

As we fight the terrorists, we're working to build capable and effective Iraqi security forces so they can take the lead in the fight and eventually take responsibility for the safety and security of their citizens without major foreign assistance.

And on the economic side, we're helping the Iraqis rebuild their infrastructure, reform their economy, and build the prosperity that will give all Iraqis a stake in a free and peaceful Iraq. In doing all this, we've involved the United Nations, other international organizations, our coalition partners, and supportive regional states in helping Iraqis build their future.

In the days ahead, I'll be discussing the various pillars of our strategy in Iraq. Today I want to speak in depth about one aspect of this strategy that will be critical to the victory in Iraq, and that's the training of Iraqi security forces. To defeat the terrorists and marginalize the Saddamists and rejectionists, Iraqis need strong military and police forces. Iraqi troops bring knowledge and capabilities to the fight that coalition forces cannot.

Iraqis know their people. They know their language, and they know their culture, and they know who the terrorists are. Iraqi forces are earning the trust of their countrymen, who are willing to help them in the fight against the enemy. As the Iraqi forces grow in number, they're helping to keep a better hold on the cities taken from the enemy. And as the Iraqi forces grow more capable, they are increasingly taking the lead in the fight against the terrorists. Our goal is to train enough Iraqi forces so they can carry the fight, and this will take time and patience. And it's worth the time, and it's worth the effort because Iraqis and Americans share a common enemy, and when that enemy is defeated in Iraq, Americans will be safer here at home.

The training of the Iraqi security forces is an enormous task, and it always hasn't gone smoothly. We all remember the reports of some Iraqi security forces running from the fight more than a year ago. Yet in the past year, Iraqi forces have made real progress.

At this time last year, there were only a handful of Iraqi battalions ready for combat. Now there are over 120 Iraqi army and police combat battalions in the fight against the terrorists, typically comprised of between 350 and 800 Iraqi forces. Of these, about 80 Iraqi battalions are fighting side by side with coalition forces, and about 40 others are taking the lead in the fight. Most of these 40 battalions are controlling their

own battle space and conducting their own operations against the terrorists with some coalition support, and they're helping to turn the tide of this struggle in freedom's favor. America and our troops are proud to stand side by side with these brave Iraqi fighters.

The progress of the Iraqi forces is especially clear when the recent antiterrorist operations in Tall 'Afar are compared with last year's assault in Fallujah. In Fallujah, the assault was led by nine coalition battalions made up primarily of United States Marines and Army, with six Iraqi battalions supporting them. The Iraqis fought and sustained casualties. Yet in most situations, the Iraqi role was limited to protecting the flanks of coalition forces and securing ground that had already been cleared out by our troops. This year in Tall 'Afar, it was a very different story.

The assault was primarily led by Iraqi security forces, 11 Iraqi battalions, backed by 5 coalition battalions providing support. Many Iraqi units conducted their own antiterrorist operations and controlled their own battle space, hunting for enemy fighters and securing neighborhoods block by block. To consolidate their military success, Iraqi units stayed behind to help maintain law and order, and reconstruction projects have been started to improve infrastructure and create jobs and provide hope.

One of the Iraqi soldiers who fought in Tall 'Afar was a private named Tarek Hazem. This brave Iraqi fighter says, quote, "We're not afraid. We're here to protect our country. All we feel is motivated to kill the terrorists," end quote. Iraqi forces not only cleared the city; they held it. And because of the skill and courage of the Iraqi forces, the citizens of Tall 'Afar were able to vote in October's constitutional referendum.

As Iraqi forces increasingly take the lead in the fight against the terrorists, they're also taking control of more and more Iraqi territory. At this moment, over 30 Iraqi army battalions have assumed primary control of their own areas of responsibility. In Baghdad, Iraqi battalions have taken over major sectors of the capital, including some of the city's toughest neighborhoods. Last year, the area around Baghdad's Haifa Street was so thick with terrorists that it earned the nickname "Purple Heart Boulevard." Then Iraqi forces took responsibility for this dangerous neighborhood, and attacks are now down.

Our coalition has handed over roughly 90 square miles of Baghdad Province to Iraqi security forces. Iraqi battalions have taken over responsibility for areas in south-central Iraq, sectors of southeast Iraq, sectors of western Iraq, and sectors of north-central Iraq. As Iraqi forces take responsibility for more of their own territory, coalition forces can concentrate on training Iraqis and hunting down high-value targets, like the terrorist Zarqawi and his associates.

We're also transferring forward operating bases to Iraqi control. Over a dozen bases in Iraq have been handed over to the Iraqi Government, including Saddam Hussein's former palace in Tikrit, which has served as the coalition headquarters in one of Iraq's most dangerous regions. From many of these bases, the Iraqi security forces are planning and executing operations against the terrorists and bringing security and pride to the Iraqi people.

Progress by the Iraqi security forces has come, in part, because we learned from our earlier experiences and made changes in the way we help train Iraqi troops. When our coalition first arrived, we began the process of creating an Iraqi army to defend the country from external threats and an Iraqi civil defense corps to help provide the security within Iraq's borders. The civil defense forces did not have sufficient firepower or training. They proved to be no match for an enemy armed with machine guns, rocket-propelled grenades, and mortars, so the approach was adjusted. Working with Iraq's leaders, we moved the civil defense forces into the Iraqi army. We changed the way they're trained and

equipped, and we focused the army's mission on defeating those fighting against a free Iraq, whether internal or external.

Now, all Iraqi army recruits receive about the same length of basic training as new recruits in the U.S. Army, a 5-week core course, followed by an additional 3 to 7 weeks of specialized training. With coalition help, Iraqis have established schools for the Iraqi military services, an Iraqi military academy, a noncommissioned officer academy, a military police school, a bomb disposal school, and NATO has established an Iraqi Joint Staff College. There's also an increased focus on leadership training, with professional development courses for Iraqi squad leaders and platoon sergeants and warrant officers and sergeants major. A new generation of Iraqi officers is being trained, leaders who will lead their forces with skill so they can defeat the terrorists and secure their own freedom.

Similar changes have taken place in the training of the Iraqi police. When our coalition first arrived, Iraqi police recruits spent too much time of their training in classroom lectures, and they received limited training in the use of small arms. This did not adequately prepare them for the fight they would face. And so we changed the way the Iraqi police are trained. Now, police recruits spend more of their time outside the classroom with intensive hands-on training in antiterrorism operations and real-world survival skills.

Iraq has now six basic police academies and one in Jordan that together produce over 3,500 new police officers every 10 weeks. The Baghdad police academy has simulation models where Iraqis train to stop IED attacks and operate roadblocks. And because Iraqi police are not just facing common criminals, they are getting live-fire training with AK–47s.

As more and more skilled Iraqi security forces have come on line, there's been another important change in the way new Iraqi recruits are trained. When the training effort began, nearly all the trainers came from coalition countries. Today, the vast majority of Iraqi police and army recruits are being taught by Iraqi instructors. By training the trainers, we're helping Iraqis create an institutional capability that will allow the Iraqi forces to continue to develop and grow, long after coalition forces have left Iraq.

As the training has improved, so has the quality of the recruits being trained. Even though the terrorists are targeting Iraqi police and army recruits, there is no shortage of Iraqis who are willing to risk their lives to secure the future of a free Iraq.

The efforts to include more Sunnis in the future of Iraq were given a significant boost earlier this year. More than 60 influential Sunni clerics issued a *fatwa* calling on young Sunnis to join the Iraqi security forces, quote, "for the sake of preserving the souls, property, and honor" of the Iraqi people. These religious leaders are helping to make the Iraqi security forces a truly national institution, one that is able to serve, protect, and defend all the Iraqi people.

Some critics dismiss this progress and point to the fact that only one Iraqi battalion has achieved complete independence from the coalition. To achieve complete independence, an Iraqi battalion must do more than fight the enemy on its own; it must also have the ability to provide its own support elements, including logistics, airlift, intelligence, and command and control through their ministries.

Not every Iraqi unit has to meet this level of capability in order for the Iraqi security forces to take the lead in the fight against the enemy. As a matter of fact, there are some battalions from NATO militaries that would not be able to meet this standard. The facts are that Iraqi units are growing more independent and more capable. They are defending their new democracy with courage and determination. They're in the fight today, and they will be in the fight for freedom tomorrow.

We're also helping Iraqis build the institutions they need to support their own forces. For example, a national depot has been established north of Baghdad that is responsible for supplying the logistical needs of the ten divisions of the Iraqi army. Regional support units and base support units have been created across the country with the mission of supplying their own war fighters. Iraqis now have a small air force, that recently conducted its first combat airlift operations, bringing Iraqi troops to the front in Tall 'Afar. The new Iraqi navy is now helping to protect the vital ports of Basra and Umm Qasr. An Iraqi military intelligence school has been established to produce skilled Iraqi intelligence analysts and collectors. By taking all these steps, we're helping the Iraqi security forces become self-supporting so they can take the fight to the enemy and so they can sustain themselves in the fight.

Over the past 2½ years, we've faced some setbacks in standing up a capable Iraqi security force, and their performance is still uneven in some areas. Yet many of those forces have made real gains over the past year, and Iraqi soldiers take pride in their progress. An Iraqi first lieutenant named Shoqutt describes the transformation of his unit this way: "I really think we've turned the corner here. At first, the whole country didn't take us seriously. Now things are different. Our guys are hungry to demonstrate their skill and to show the world."

Our troops in Iraq see the gains that Iraqis are making. Lieutenant Colonel Todd Wood of Richmond Hill, Georgia, is training Iraqi forces in Saddam Hussein's hometown of Tikrit. He says this about Iraqi units he's working with: "They're pretty much ready to go it on their own. What they're doing now would have been impossible a year ago. These guys are patriots, willing to go out knowing the insurgents would like nothing better than to kill them and their families. They're getting better, and they'll keep getting better."

Our commanders on the ground see the gains the Iraqis are making. General Marty Dempsey is the commander of the Multinational Security Transition Command. Here's what he says about the transformation of the Iraqi security forces: "It's beyond description. They are far better equipped, far better trained" than they once were. The Iraqis, General Dempsey says, are "increasingly in control of their future and their own security—the Iraqi security forces are regaining control of the country."

As the Iraqi security forces stand up, their confidence is growing, and they're taking on tougher and more important missions on their own. As the Iraqi security forces stand up, the confidence of the Iraqi people is growing, and Iraqis are providing the vital intelligence needed to track down the terrorists. And as the Iraqi security forces stand up, coalition forces can stand down, and when our mission of defeating the terrorists in Iraq is complete, our troops will return home to a proud nation.

This is a goal our Iraqi allies share. An Iraqi army sergeant named Abbass Abdul Jabar puts it this way: "We have to help the coalition forces as much as we can to give them a chance to go home. These guys have been helping us. Now we have to protect our own families." America will help the Iraqis so they can protect their families and secure their free nation. We will stay as long as necessary to complete the mission. If our military leaders tell me we need more troops, I will send them.

For example, we've increased our force levels in Iraq to 160,000, up from 137,000, in preparation for the December elections. My commanders tell me that as Iraqi forces become more capable, the mission of our forces in Iraq will continue to change. We will continue to shift from providing security and conducting operations against the enemy nationwide to conducting more specialized operations targeted at the most dangerous terrorists. We will increasingly move out of Iraqi cities, reduce the number

of bases from which we operate, and conduct fewer patrols and convoys.

As the Iraqi forces gain experience and the political process advances, we will be able to decrease our troop levels in Iraq without losing our capability to defeat the terrorists. These decisions about troop levels will be driven by the conditions on the ground in Iraq and the good judgment of our commanders, not by artificial timetables set by politicians in Washington.

Some are calling for a deadline for withdrawal. Many advocating an artificial timetable for withdrawing our troops are sincere, but I believe they're sincerely wrong. Pulling our troops out before they've achieved their purpose is not a plan for victory. As Democratic Senator Joe Lieberman said recently, setting an artificial timetable would "discourage our troops because it seems to be heading for the door. It will encourage the terrorists. It will confuse the Iraqi people."

Senator Lieberman is right. Setting an artificial deadline to withdraw would send a message across the world that America is weak and an unreliable ally. Setting an artificial deadline to withdraw would send a signal to our enemies that if they wait long enough, America will cut and run and abandon its friends. And setting an artificial deadline to withdraw would vindicate the terrorists' tactics of beheadings and suicide bombings and mass murder and invite new attacks on America. To all who wear the uniform, I make you this pledge: America will not run in the face of car bombers and assassins so long as I am your Commander in Chief.

As we train Iraqis to take more responsibility in the battle with the terrorists, we're also helping them build a democracy that is worthy of their sacrifice. And in just over 2½ years, the Iraqi people have made incredible progress on the road to lasting freedom. Iraqis have gone from living under the boot of a brutal tyrant to liberation, free elections, and a democratic constitution. And in 15 days, they will go to the polls to elect a fully constitutional government that will lead them for the next 4 years.

With each ballot cast, the Iraqi people have sent a clear message to the terrorists: Iraqis will not be intimidated. The Iraqi people will determine the destiny of their country. The future of Iraq belongs to freedom. Despite the costs, the pain, and the danger, Iraqis are showing courage and are moving forward to build a free society and a lasting democracy in the heart of the Middle East, and the United States of America will help them succeed.

Some critics continue to assert that we have no plan in Iraq except to, quote, "stay the course." If by "stay the course," they mean we will not allow the terrorists to break our will, they're right. If by "stay the course," they mean we will not permit Al Qaida to turn Iraq into what Afghanistan was under the Taliban, a safe haven for terrorism and a launching pad for attacks on America, they're right as well. If by "stay the course" they mean that we're not learning from our experiences or adjusting our tactics to meet the challenges on the ground, then they're flat wrong. As our top commander in Iraq, General Casey, has said, "Our commanders on the ground are continuously adapting and adjusting, not only to what the enemy does but also to try to out-think the enemy and get ahead of him." Our strategy in Iraq is clear; our tactics are flexible and dynamic. We have changed them as conditions required, and they are bringing us victory against a brutal enemy.

Victory in Iraq will demand the continued determination and resolve of the American people. It will also demand the strength and personal courage of the men and women who wear our Nation's uniform. And as the future officers of the United States Navy and Marine Corps, you're preparing to join this fight. You do so at a time when there is a vigorous debate about the war in Iraq. I know that for our men and women in uniform, this

debate can be unsettling. When you're risking your life to accomplish a mission, the last thing you want to hear is that mission being questioned in our Nation's Capital. I want you to know that while there may be a lot of heated rhetoric in Washington, DC, one thing is not in dispute: The American people stand behind you.

And we should not fear the debate in Washington. It's one of the great strengths of our democracy that we can discuss our differences openly and honestly, even at times of war. Your service makes that freedom possible. And today, because of the men and women in our military, people are expressing their opinions freely in the streets of Baghdad as well.

Most Americans want two things in Iraq: They want to see our troops win, and they want to see our troops come home as soon as possible. And those are my goals as well. I will settle for nothing less than complete victory. In World War II, victory came when the Empire of Japan surrendered on the deck of the USS *Missouri.* In Iraq, there will not be a signing ceremony on the deck of a battleship. Victory will come when the terrorists and Saddamists can no longer threaten Iraq's democracy, when the Iraqi security forces can provide for the safety of their own citizens, and when Iraq is not a safe haven for terrorists to plot new attacks on our Nation.

As we make progress toward victory, Iraqis will take more responsibility for their security, and fewer U.S. forces will be needed to complete the mission. America will not abandon Iraq. We will not turn that country over to the terrorists and put the American people at risk. Iraq will be a free nation and a strong ally in the Middle East, and this will add to the security of the American people.

In the short run, we're going to bring justice to our enemies. In the long run, the best way to ensure the security of our own citizens is to spread the hope of freedom across the broader Middle East. We've seen freedom conquer evil and secure the peace before. In World War II, free nations came together to fight the ideology of fascism, and freedom prevailed. And today, Germany and Japan are democracies, and they are allies in securing the peace. In the cold war, freedom defeated the ideology of communism and led to a democratic movement that freed the nations of Eastern and Central Europe from Soviet domination, and today, these nations are allies in the war on terror.

Today in the Middle East, freedom is once again contending with an ideology that seeks to sow anger and hatred and despair. And like fascism and communism before, the hateful ideologies that use terror will be defeated by the unstoppable power of freedom. And as democracy spreads in the Middle East, these countries will become allies in the cause of peace.

Advancing the cause of freedom and democracy in the Middle East begins with ensuring the success of a free Iraq. Freedom's victory in that country will inspire democratic reformers from Damascus to Tehran and spread hope across a troubled region and lift a terrible threat from the lives of our citizens. By strengthening Iraqi democracy, we will gain a partner in the cause of peace and moderation in the Muslim world and an ally in the worldwide struggle against the terrorists.

Advancing the ideal of democracy and self-government is the mission that created our Nation, and now it is the calling of a new generation of Americans. We will meet the challenge of our time. We will answer history's call with confidence because we know that freedom is the destiny of every man, woman, and child on this Earth.

Before our mission in Iraq is accomplished, there will be tough days ahead. A time of war is a time of sacrifice, and we've lost some very fine men and women in this war on terror. Many of you know comrades and classmates who left our shores to defend freedom and who did not live to make the journey home. We pray

for the military families who mourn the loss of loved ones. We hold them in our hearts, and we honor their memory of every fallen soldier, sailor, airman, coastguardsman, and marine.

One of those fallen heroes is a marine corporal named Jeff Starr, who was killed fighting the terrorists in Ramadi earlier this year. After he died, a letter was found on his laptop computer. Here's what he wrote, he said, "If you're reading this, then I've died in Iraq. I don't regret going. Everybody dies, but few get to do it for something as important as freedom. It may seem confusing why we are in Iraq. It's not to me. I'm here helping these people, so they can live the way we live, not to have to worry about tyrants or vicious dictators. Others have died for my freedom, now this is my mark."

There is only one way to honor the sacrifice of Corporal Starr and his fallen comrades, and that is to take up their mantle, carry on the fight, and complete their mission.

We will take the fight to the terrorists. We will help the Iraqi people lay the foundations of a strong democracy that can govern itself, sustain itself, and defend itself. And by laying the foundations of freedom in Iraq, we will lay the foundation of peace for generations to come.

You all are the ones who will help accomplish all this. Our freedom and our way of life are in your hands, and they're in the best of hands. I want to thank you for your service to the cause of freedom. I want to thank you for wearing the uniform. May God bless you all, and may God continue to bless the United States of America.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:45 a.m. in Alumni Hall at the U.S. Naval Academy. In his remarks, he referred to Vice Adm. Rodney P. Rempt, USN, superintendent, U.S. Naval Academy; Adm. Michael G. Mullen, USN, Chief of Naval Operations; former President Saddam Hussein of Iraq; senior Al Qaida associate Abu Musab Al Zarqawi; Usama bin Laden, leader of the Al Qaida terrorist organization; Lt. Col. Todd Wood, USA, commander, 2d Battalion, 7th Infantry Regiment, Task Force Liberty; and Gen. George W. Casey, Jr., USA, commanding general, Multi-National Force—Iraq. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of these remarks.

Remarks at a Reception for Senatorial Candidate Michael S. Steele in Baltimore, Maryland
November 30, 2005

The President. Thank you. As Maryland builds the bridge, you might as well make it a "Steele" bridge. I'm proud to be here to say to the good folks of this important State, Michael Steele is the right man for the United States Senate.

He's a decent man. He's an honorable man. He's a family man. Those are the kind of traits you want when you elect somebody to the United States Senate. And there's no doubt in my mind he's going to win. People from both political parties are going to realize this man is capable of doing the job, that he'll bring dignity to the office, that he'll help heal racial wounds, that he'll show there's a future for everybody in the State of Maryland.

Michael has got a record. He's served—you know, one of the things people look at when they're looking at people running for office, do they know anything about the economy. The truth of the matter is

a lot of people are wondering whether or not they're going to have a job. And under the Ehrlich-Steele administration, the unemployment rate here in Maryland is 4.1 percent. That's a record. It means people are working. You can forget all the politics rhetoric. People need to look at the bottom line. People of this State are working; they're able to make a living.

I've got some good economic news for our Nation. The latest economic growth is at 4.3 percent. America's workers and businesses have overcome the challenges of two hurricanes and high energy prices, so the third quarter growth is at the 4.3 percent. It's the fastest rate in nearly 2 years.

Just goes to show that when Government unleashes the power and potential of the American worker, the small-business owner, the entrepreneurs, when America promotes free markets, lower taxes, and less regulations, the country will continue to prosper and maintain our economic leadership in the world. You need to put Michael Steele in the United States Senate because he understands that small businesses create the jobs.

I appreciate Andrea Steele. I appreciate her standing by her man during this campaign. She's going to be a great—a great Senator's wife. Michael married well, and so did I. [*Laughter*] And Laura sends all her best.

Lt. Gov. Michael S. Steele of Maryland. Thank you very much.

The President. I want to thank you all for being here. I want to thank you for contributing to this good man. You see, when you're out there running for office, sometimes it may feel a little lonely, until you walk into a room just like this. [*Laughter*] It's hard to feel lonely when you've got this kind of support, Michael.

Lt. Gov. Steele. Yes, it is.

The President. It's important that you contribute to his campaign the way you have, and I want to thank you for doing that. It's also important that you contribute by talking to your neighbors and when the time comes, to pick up the telephone and encourage people to vote. And when you're doing so, make sure you not only include Republicans but Democrats and independents as well. You see, people in this country want there to be honest Government. No matter what party they're from, they want a decent, honorable man to represent them. And in Michael Steele, you've got such a person.

I like his attitude about education, and I hope the people of Maryland do as well. Listen to what he said. He said, "We need to replace the systems that trap poor kids in failing schools." In other words, his vision is to focus on the children, not the system, but the children. He agrees with me; no child should be left behind in America. And when we find success, we'll praise success. But when we find failure, we've got to have the courage to challenge the status quo, to insist upon high standards and excellence for every single child, not only in Maryland but around the country. He'll be a great United States Senator when it comes to education.

I appreciate Michael Steele helping to launch the Governor's Office of Community Initiatives here in Maryland. It's part of the Faith-Based Initiative. The Faith-Based Initiative recognizes there's a limitation to the capabilities of Government to cause people to love one another. Government is about law and justice—that's what Government is. But love comes from a higher calling. And there are thousands of our fellow citizens who have heard that call to love a neighbor just like they'd like to be loved themselves and are willing to serve in some of the darkest communities and areas of our country, where people don't have hope, where the light doesn't shine in. But the light can shine in if we unleash the vast potential of America, the great compassion. And Michael Steele understands that.

Michael will come to Washington, DC—and he's coming, by the way, with a nation that is at war. I wish I could report to

you that we're not at war, but we are. And we need Members of the United States Senate who understand the reality of the world in which we live.

There's an enemy out there that still wants to do us harm. And they want to because their vision of the future is completely opposite from ours. We believe in freedom. We believe in the right for people to worship freely, to speak their mind freely, to print their editorials freely. That's what we believe. They believe in the opposite. They resent freedom. They have a totalitarian view of the world that says, "You either believe it my way, or you're going to be in trouble." And they want to spread that vision around the world. How do I know? They've told us, and we've got to take their words seriously.

We should never forget the lessons of September the 11th, 2001, that there's an enemy out there willing to inflict great harm on the American people. And because we're not going to change in our beliefs about freedom, they're not going to change in their beliefs about causing us harm. And therefore, there's only one thing we need to do, and that is to stay on the offensive, bring these people to justice for hurting American people.

And a Senator Michael Steele will understand that. The people of Maryland will send somebody to the United States Senate who understands the high stakes of the world in which we live, the need to stay firm in our—and have strong resolve in doing our duty, which is to protect the American people. The enemy has declared that Iraq is the central front in the war on terror, and we got to take them for their word.

Today I gave a speech in Annapolis. I made it abundantly clear to the American people we have one objective in Iraq, and that is victory, to make sure that we secure the American homeland by defeating the enemy in Iraq. And we got a strategy to do that. On the one hand, we're helping Iraq develop a democracy. Think of what's happened in that country in 2½ years, and compare it to other democracies such as our own.

In 2½ years, they've gone from brutal dictator, enemy of America, was on a state sponsored list for terror, at the very minimum had the capability of developing weapons of mass destruction if the world looked the other way, a dictator who had been sent in front of the United Nations 15 or 16 different times with resolutions—the whole world recognized the evil nature of this person. And then they were liberated, and then they had elections, and then they ratified the Constitution. And now they're going to have elections on December the 15th, all in 2½ years. Democracy is on the move. A free society is emerging.

And people say, "Why is that important?" Well, free societies yield the peace. History has proven that democracies are peaceful—yield the peaceful countries. And we need allies in the war against these terrorists, and we're going to have one when we succeed in Iraq.

The other part of our strategy is to have the Iraqis defend their own country, is to train them so they can take the fight, is to prepare them to defeat the terrorists who want to use Iraq as a safe haven. These terrorists have no philosophy; they got no ideology that says the world will be better. The only thing they've got is the capacity and the willingness to kill innocent people. That's the only weapon they have.

What they're trying to do is to get on our TV screens and shake our will and cause us to leave before we have completed the mission so they can have Iraq as a safe haven to plot, plan, and to spread their totalitarian vision. They don't understand America. Our will will not be shaken. We will complete the mission and free Iraq.

And it's going to be important for this important State to have a United States Senator who understands the stakes. And Michael Steele understands the duty of

protecting the American people. He understands the importance of supporting our troops in harm's way. Anytime we've got a man or woman in uniform in harm's way, he or she deserves the full support of the United States Government, and Michael Steele as a Senator will do that.

I also look forward to working with Senator Steele when it comes the advancing democracy around the world. You know, I just came back from the Far East, where I went to South Korea, Japan, China, and Mongolia. As an aside, it is a huge honor to represent the United States overseas. I mean, we are such a compassionate, decent nation it is an honor to stand up in other parts of the world and say—talk to people about the values we believe in. And during my visit there, I spent time with Prime Minister Koizumi of Japan. That's nothing unusual about the U.S. President sitting down with the Prime Minister from Japan. But it is when you put it in historical context.

And we were talking about the peace. The Prime Minister and I were talking about how to help Iraq become a democracy, understanding that a democracy in the heart of the Middle East will defy the terrorists' ambitions for spreading a totalitarian regime, that democracy is the only system that allows people to have hope for the long run, and that helps defeat resentment and the bitterness that they use to recruit their suiciders. We talked about North Korea, how to make the Korean Peninsula nuclear-free so that the world is more peaceful.

In other words, we're talking about laying the foundation for peace, and yet it was only 60 years ago that my dad and many of your relatives fought the Japanese. They were the sworn enemy of the United States of America. And here it is, 60 years later, that the son of a Navy bomber pilot who fought in Japan was sitting down with the Prime Minister of our former enemy, talking of peace.

So what happened? What historical lesson can we draw from that? Well, the lesson is, is that Japan adopted a Japanese-style democracy. See, democracies are peaceful societies. History has proven democracy yields the peace. And what you're seeing unfolding in the hard work we're doing today is laying the foundation for peace. Someday an American President and a United States Senator is going to look back at this generation's call and say, "Thank goodness they stood true to the values America believes in—freedom; freedom to worship; human rights and human dignity—and helped spread that to parts of the world." Someday an American President is going to be sitting down, talking to a leader from an Islamic country, working on keeping the peace. We're laying the foundation of peace for generations to come.

And I look forward to working with United States Senator Michael Steele to lay that foundation of peace for generations to come.

Michael's mother is named Maebell. Mine was named Barbara. [*Laughter*] She says she made their home, growing up, rich in character. That's what she said. She worked in a Laundromat for 45 years. She understood the true definition of wealth and richness. She said she made her home rich in character, rich in turning hope into action. That's the kind of fellow you want in the United States Senate representing you, somebody raised in that kind of way, somebody who was taught character matters more than anything else. Character is the basis for leadership.

Michael Steele is a man who loves his family, loves his country, and loves his God. Michael Steele will make a United States Senator that will bring pride to the great State of Maryland. And I'm proud to stand with him.

Thank you all for coming. May God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:49 a.m. in the North Club Area Lounge at M&T Bank Stadium. In his remarks, he referred to Lt. Gov. Steele's wife, Andrea, and his mother, Maebell Steele. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Statement on Signing the Military Quality of Life and Veterans Affairs Appropriations Act, 2006
November 30, 2005

Today, I have signed into law H.R. 2528, the "Military Quality of Life and Veterans Affairs Appropriations Act, 2006." This Act appropriates funds for construction to support the operations of the United States Armed Forces and for military family housing. The Act also provides funds to support the medical care and other needs of our Nation's veterans.

The Constitution requires bicameral passage, and presentment to the President, of all congressional actions governing other branches, as the Supreme Court of the United States recognized in INS v. Chadha (1983), and thus prohibits conditioning executive branch action on the approval of congressional committees. Many provisions of the Act conflict with this requirement and therefore shall be construed as calling solely for notification, including the following: "Department of Defense Base Closure Account 2005," "Department of Veterans Affairs, Information Technology Systems," "Department of Veterans Affairs, Construction, Major Projects," and sections 128, 129, 130, 201, 211, 216, 225, 226, 227, and 229.

Several provisions of the Act require notice to the Congress, including sections 107, 110, 113, and 118, which require notice of the relocation of activities between military installations, initiation of a new installation abroad, U.S. military exercises involving $100,000 in construction costs, and the initiation of certain types of programs. As the Supreme Court of the United States has made clear, the President's authority to classify and control access to information bearing on national security flows from the Constitution and does not depend upon a legislative grant of authority. Although notice can be provided in most situations as a matter of comity, situations may arise, especially in wartime, in which the President must act promptly under his constitutional grants of executive power and authority as Commander in Chief while protecting sensitive national security information. The executive branch shall construe these sections to require notice at a time and in a manner consistent with the President's constitutional authority.

The Constitution commits to the President the primary responsibility for conducting the foreign relations of the United States, including the exclusive responsibility for formulating the position of the United States in international fora and conducting negotiations with foreign nations. Section 118, which purports, through a reporting requirement, to direct the power of the Department of Defense to conduct the foreign relations of the United States, shall be construed as advisory, consistent with the Constitution's grant of such power to the President.

Section 126 of the Act purports to require Department of Defense officials to respond in writing within 21 days to any question or inquiry from certain legislative subcommittees. The executive branch shall construe this section in a manner consistent with the President's constitutional authority to supervise the unitary executive branch and to withhold information the disclosure of which could impair foreign relations, the

national security, the deliberative processes of the Executive, or the performance of the Executive's constitutional duties.

GEORGE W. BUSH

The White House,
November 30, 2005.

NOTE: H.R. 2528, approved November 30, was assigned Public Law No. 109–114. An original was not available for verification of the content of this statement.

Statement on Signing the Transportation, Treasury, Housing and Urban Development, the Judiciary, the District of Columbia, and Independent Agencies Appropriations Act, 2006
November 30, 2005

Today, I have signed into law H.R. 3058, the "Transportation, Treasury, and Housing and Urban Development, the Judiciary, the District of Columbia, and Independent Agencies Appropriations Act, 2006." This Act appropriates funds for fiscal year 2006 to these departments and agencies, and for other purposes.

The executive branch shall construe as calling solely for notification those provisions of the Act that are inconsistent with the requirements of bicameral passage and presentment set forth in the Constitution, as construed by the Supreme Court of the United States in 1983 in INS v. Chadha. Such provisions include: sections 183, 201, 205, 211, 212, 217, 218, 603, 608, 710, 711, 720, 838, and 841, and provisions under the headings "Department of Transportation, Office of the Secretary, Salaries and Expenses," "Department of Transportation, Office of the Secretary, Working Capital Fund," "Federal Transit Administration, Administrative Expenses," "Department of the Treasury, Departmental Offices, Salaries and Expenses," "Internal Revenue Service, Business Systems Modernization," "High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area Program," "General Services Administration, Federal Buildings Fund," and "National Archive and Records Administration, Electronic Records Archives."

The executive branch shall construe the provisions of the Act in a manner consistent with the President's authority to supervise the unitary executive branch and take care that the laws be faithfully executed, including the authority to direct which officers in the executive branch shall assist the President in faithfully executing the law. Specific provisions that raise this concern include language under the heading "Office of Management and Budget, Salaries and Expenses" relating to the review of executive branch orders, activities, regulations, transcripts, and testimony, and relating to the review of certain matters in reports to be submitted to the Congress through the Secretary of the Army.

The executive branch shall construe provisions in the Act that purport to mandate or regulate submission of information to the Congress, other entities outside the executive branch, or the public in a manner consistent with the President's constitutional authority to withhold information that could impair foreign relations, national security, the deliberative processes of the Executive, or the performance of the Executive's constitutional duties. Such provisions include sections 120, 182, 818, 820, and language under the heading "Operating Subsidy Grants to the National Passenger Railroad Corporation."

Certain provisions in the Act purport to allocate funds for specified purposes as set forth in the joint explanatory statement of managers that accompanied the Act; to

make changes in statements of managers that accompanied various appropriations bills reported from conferences in the past; or to direct compliance with a committee report. The executive branch shall construe these provisions in a manner consistent with the bicameral passage and presentment requirements of the Constitution for the making of a law. Such provisions include section 710 and language under the headings "Community Planning and Development, Community Development Fund," "Department of Housing and Urban Development, Management and Administration, Salaries and Expenses," and "Office of Management and Budget, Salaries and Expenses."

The executive branch shall construe provisions that purport to require or regulate the submission of legislative proposals to the Congress by executive branch officials consistently with the President's constitutional authority to recommend to the Congress such measures as he judges necessary and expedient and authority to supervise the unitary executive branch. Such provisions include sections 182, 208, 219, 315, and 818.

Section 809 seeks to prohibit the expenditure of funds for the salaries of "any person for the filling of any position for which he or she has been nominated after the Senate has voted not to approve the nomination of said person." The executive branch shall construe this provision in a manner consistent with the President's constitutional authority to make recess appointments.

The executive branch shall construe section 836, relating to assignment of executive branch employees to perform functions in the legislative branch, in a manner consistent with the President's constitutional authority to supervise the unitary executive branch and as Commander in Chief, and recognizing that the President cannot be compelled to give up the authority of his office as a condition of receiving the funds necessary to carrying out the duties of his office.

Certain provisions of the Act relate to race, ethnicity, or gender. The executive branch shall construe such provisions in a manner consistent with the requirement that the Federal Government afford equal protection of the laws under the Due Process Clause of the Fifth Amendment to the Constitution.

GEORGE W. BUSH

The White House,
November 30, 2005.

NOTE: H.R. 3058, approved November 30, was assigned Public Law No. 109–115. An original was not available for verification of the content of this statement.

Remarks on World AIDS Day
December 1, 2005

Thanks for coming. Thank you all. How about my line of work, where you get introduced by your wife? [*Laughter*] And I'm glad I got introduced by Laura because she deeply cares about the issue of HIV/AIDS. She's a great First Lady with a compassionate heart. In her travels, she's carried a message of hope for the suffering and a message that the empowerment of women is essential to the prevention of AIDS. I thank you for your introduction. More importantly, I thank you for your love.

I want to thank you all for coming and for joining the Government and, more importantly, the armies of compassion in the

challenge of fighting AIDS. I want to thank Secretary Rice for being here, Secretary of State. The Secretary of Defense is with us, Secretary Rumsfeld; Carlos Gutierrez, Secretary of Commerce; Secretary of Labor Elaine Chao; Mike Leavitt, who is the Secretary of Health and Human Services; USAID Director Andrew Natsios is with us.

Ambassador Randy Tobias, who is the U.S. Global AIDS Coordinator and has done a heck of a job. Thank you for being here. CDC Director Dr. Julie Gerberding; Tony Fauci is with us as well; Elias Zerhouni of the NIH—thank you all for being here. Thanks for being—making sure the scientific community stays on the leading edge of research to help save lives.

I appreciate the Peace Corps Director Gaddi Vasquez for joining us. I'm proud that two United States Senators have taken time out of their busy schedules to join us, Senator Dick Lugar and Senator Mike Enzi. Thank you all for being here. It means a lot.

Finally, I want to thank the diplomatic corps for joining us. You're going to hear a strong message of support, and I know you'll relay this message back to your governments, along with a message that in order to deal with HIV/AIDS we must confront it honestly. We're glad you're here, your Excellencies. Thank you for joining us.

Today, with people around the world, not just here in America but all around the world, 40 million—we turn our thoughts to the more than 40 million men, women, and children who are living with HIV. That's what World AIDS Day is all about. And on World AIDS Day, we renew our commitment to turn the tide against this disease.

HIV/AIDS is a global health crisis. It is also a daily burden for many of our families and neighbors and friends. Across Africa, this pandemic threatens the stability and the future of whole societies. In Asia, HIV/AIDS is a challenge that grows daily and must be confronted directly. Here in the United States, over a million of our citizens face this chronic condition. At the start of this century, AIDS causes suffering from remote villages of Africa to the heart of America's big cities. This danger is multiplied by indifference and complacency. This danger will be overcome by compassion, honesty, and decisive action.

I believe America has a unique ability and a special calling to fight this disease. We are blessed with great scientific knowledge. We're a generous country that has always reached out to feed the hungry and rescue captives and care for the sick. We are guided by the conviction of our founding—that the Author of Life has endowed every life with matchless value.

Here in America, some of our fellow citizens have now lived 15 years or more with HIV/AIDS. The Federal Government provides more than $17 billion a year to help people in America living with HIV/AIDS, including funding that brings lifesaving drugs and treatment to hundreds of thousands of low-income Americans. With the help of medicine and their own daily courage, many people are managing a condition that was once uniformly fatal and proving that HIV/AIDS is a long-term illness like heart disease or diabetes.

Yet America still sees an estimated 40,000 new infections each year. This is not inevitable, and it's not acceptable. HIV/AIDS remains a special concern in the gay community, which has effectively fought this disease for decades through education and prevention. And the demographics of this disease continue to change. AIDS is increasingly found among women and minorities. Nearly half of the new infections are found in the African-American community.

We're determined to make voluntary HIV testing a routine part of health care in America, so people can know the truth about their status, tell others, and get the treatment they need. We're determined to end mother-to-child transmission of HIV in

America because medicine makes it possible and conscience demands it. We're determined to improve care for minorities and citizens in the greatest need, and so I urge the Congress to reauthorize the Ryan White Care Act.

Our concern about HIV/AIDS does not stop at our borders. Other nations face greater challenges, yet they are moving forward with courage and determination that inspires our respect and deserves our support. Nations like Uganda and Kenya have demonstrated that leadership and honesty can overcome stigma and reduce rates of infection. Nations like Botswana and Namibia have shown that antiretroviral treatments can be widely delivered and highly successful. These countries and many others are fighting for the lives of their citizens, and America is now their strongest partner in that fight, and we're proud to be so.

We're supporting our partners through the Global Fund, which is helping nations purchase medicines and treat tuberculosis, the deadly infection that often accompanies AIDS.

We are also supporting our partners through the Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief, the largest initiative in history to combat a specific disease. This effort is designed to support and strengthen the AIDS-fighting strategies of many nations, including 15 heavily afflicted nations in Africa, Asia, and the Caribbean. In May 2003, we committed $15 billion over 5 years to meet specific goals: to support treatment for 2 million people, support prevention for 7 million people, support care for 10 million people.

We're working with our partners to provide treatment because the lives of people already infected should never be written off, because the best way to help a child in need is to help their parents live, and because people who know they can be treated are more likely to seek testing. We're working with our partners to expand prevention efforts that emphasize abstinence, being faithful in marriage, and using condoms correctly. This strategy, pioneered by Africans, has proven its effectiveness, and America stands behind the ABC approach to prevention.

And we're working with our partners to expand compassionate care, especially for the millions of children made orphans by this cruel disease.

The United States Congress and the American people have been generous in this effort, and Americans can know that their generosity is making a significant difference. Before the Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief, only 50,000 people of the more than 4 million people in sub-Saharan Africa needing immediate AIDS treatment were getting medicine. Think about that—only 50,000 people. After 2 years of sustained effort, approximately 400,000 sub-Saharan Africans are receiving the treatment they need.

Today I'm proud to welcome Thandazile Darby and her two children, Lewis and Emily—Lewis, by the way, is age 4; Emily, age 5—and their doctor, Dr. Helga Holst. They're from South Africa. Welcome to America.

It's the effects of a long speech. [*Laughter*] Two years ago, she took Emily to the hospital for what she thought was the mumps. Later they found that Emily and the rest of the family were HIV-positive. Thandazile's late husband's relatives tried to support her treatment for as long as they could, but the cost was too high. Thanks to the Emergency Plan funds, the Darbys began to get the treatment they desperately needed. Soon these children will start school, and now their mom dreams that someday they will attend college. Here is what Thandazile says: "The medicine used to be very expensive. I used to have to decide between taking our medicine and putting food in our bellies. It was difficult, because we needed to have food in our bellies so that we could take the pills. Now I can afford to buy food for

my family, and we can keep taking our medicine to stay healthy."

I want to thank you for joining us today, and I want to thank for your strong example of courage.

This example is repeated across Africa and beyond. In northern Namibia, Emergency Plan funds helped a Lutheran hospital build a new HIV treatment center and hire 12 doctors and nurses and other staff. As a result, this clinic has been able to put 1,475 people on treatment in less than a year. In Botswana, Emergency Plan funds are supporting two clinics to launch a peer counseling program for mothers to provide emotional support and prevent mother-to-child transmission of HIV/AIDS. In Uganda, Emergency Plan funds helped Dr. Peter Mugyenyi expand from one site serving those with AIDS to 25 sites in a single year. Today, there are 35 sites, many of them in remote rural areas, that provide treatment to 35,000 of his countrymen. I first met Peter more than 2 years ago. This man is an incredible leader. He's an incredibly compassionate soul. I want to thank you for being a lifesaver, and thank you for joining us.

We're making good progress, and none of it would be possible without the devotion and professionalism of our partners on the ground: Courageous leaders of African nations who care about their people and who tell the truth; doctors and pharmacists who work without rest in overcrowded wards; health workers, often with HIV themselves, who visit homes and make sure people are taking their medicine; people who run youth groups and clubs that encourage abstinence and help children with HIV face the challenges of life. Many of these good people who serve others are also motivated by their deep faith. And we want to expand these partnerships.

So today I am pleased to announce the New Partners Initiative. Through this initiative, which is part of the Emergency Plan, we will further reach out to our faith-based and community organizations that provide much of the health care in the developing world and make sure they have access to an American assistance. By identifying and supporting these organizations, we will reach more people, more effectively and save more lives.

Americans have always stood for human dignity when history calls. When the nations of Europe lay in rubble after World War II, America helped build a brighter future with the Marshall plan. When the developing world looked for help and inspiration, we sent the Peace Corps to lay new foundations for friendship. And now, as millions afflicted with AIDS reach out for help, the American people are once again responding. On this World AIDS Day, we are proud to stand with our friends and partners in this urgent struggle. And every life we help to save makes us proud to be Americans.

I want to thank you all for your good work. Thank you for joining us today. May God bless those who suffer, may God continue to bless our country.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:08 a.m. in Room 450 of the Dwight D. Eisenhower Executive Office Building. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of the First Lady, who introduced the President. The World AIDS Day proclamation of December 1 is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

Remarks on Signing Legislation To Place a Statue of Rosa Parks in the National Statuary Hall at the United States Capitol
December 1, 2005

The President. Welcome. Please be seated. Thank you all for being here. Laura and I thank you for joining us on this special day.

Fifty years ago, an African American woman named Rosa Parks helped set in motion a national movement for equality and freedom when she refused a bus driver's order to give her seat to a white man. The bill I'm about to sign calls for a statue of Rosa Parks to be placed in the Capitol's National Statuary Hall.

By placing her statue in the heart of the Nation's Capitol, we commemorate her work for a more perfect union, and we commit ourselves to continue to struggle for justice for every American.

I'm honored the Secretary of State has joined us as well as Secretary Alphonso Jackson. I want to thank the bill sponsors, Jesse Jackson, Jr.—I see you brought some of your family with you—[*laughter*]—Senator John Kerry, Senator Thad Cochran, Senator Dick Lugar joining us as well.

I'm proud that Bruce Gordon is here. He's the president and CEO of the NAACP. Thanks for joining us, Bruce. I want to thank all the civil rights leaders who've joined us as well. I particularly want to say thanks to Elaine Steele, representative of the Rosa Parks Institute.

Elaine Eason Steele. Right here.

The President. Thank you. Welcome. We've got a seat for you.

It's great to see Dr. Dorothy Height as well. Welcome, Dr. Height. I want to thank all of Rosa Parks's family who have joined us as well. You're kind to come.

Rosa Parks was the daughter of the South who worked as a seamstress at a department store in a Montgomery, Alabama. On December 1, 1955, she boarded a city bus. Under local and State law, African Americans had to give up their seats if any white people were standing. But after a lifetime of discrimination and a hard day's work, Rosa refused. As she would say later, quote, "I wasn't tired physically or no more tired than I usually was at the end of a working day. No, the only tired I was, was tired of giving in."

By refusing to give in, Rosa Parks showed that one candle can light the darkness. Like so many institutionalized evils, segregation ultimately depended on public accommodation. Like so many institutionalized evils, once the ugliness of these laws was held up to the light, they could not stand. Like so many institutionalized evils, these laws proved no match for the power of an awakened conscience, and as a result, the cruelty and humiliation of the Jim Crow laws are now a thing of the past.

By refusing to give in, Rosa Parks helped inspire a nationwide effort for equal justice under the law. When she refused to yield her seat, Mrs. Parks was arrested, convicted of violating the segregation laws, and fined $10, plus $4 in court fees. Her arrest sparked a boycott of the Montgomery bus lines by its black passengers and the formation of a local association of African Americans led by a young preacher named Martin Luther King, Jr. The boycott ended more than a year later after the Supreme Court struck down segregation on buses. What had begun as a simple act of civil disobedience ended up galvanizing the modern movement for civil rights.

By refusing to give in, Rosa Parks called America back to its founding promise of equality and justice for everyone. When the police officer boarded the bus and told the seamstress that he had to arrest her, he explained that the law was the law. Rosa and the black ministers who defended her invoked more than the law; they invoked the Constitution and pointed to a higher

law. Our Declaration of Independence makes clear that the human right to dignity and equality is not a grant of Government. It is the gift of the Author of Life. And by holding our Nation true to the words of its founding document, Rosa Parks helped her fellow African Americans claim their God-given freedoms and made America a better place.

Eventually the civil rights movement would succeed in persuading Congress to pass more sweeping legislation that dealt with voting rights and discrimination in public places and school segregation, and the United States Congress should renew the Voting Rights Act of 1965.

Dr. King liked to say that our Civil Rights Act was written in the streets by the citizens who marched for justice and equality. And on this day, we remember the great inspiration this movement drew from the quiet courage shown by an Alabama woman riding home on a Cleveland Avenue bus.

It is fitting that this America hero will now be honored with a monument inside the most visible symbol of American democracy. We hope that generations of Americans will remember what this brave woman did and be inspired to add their own contributions to the unfolding story of American freedom for all.

And now it's my honor to sign the bill that will make Rosa Parks the first African American woman to be honored with a statue in our Nation's Capitol.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:33 a.m. in Room 450 of the Dwight D. Eisenhower Executive Office Building. In his remarks, he referred to Elaine Eason Steele, cofounder, Rosa and Raymond Parks Institute for Self Development; and civil rights leader Dorothy I. Height. H.R. 4145, approved December 1, was assigned Public Law No. 109–116.

Remarks on Lighting the National Christmas Tree
December 1, 2005

Thank you all very much. Welcome to the Christmas Pageant of Peace. Laura and I are so honored to join you all. The lighting of the National Christmas Tree is one of the great traditions in our Nation's Capital. Each year, we gather here to celebrate the season of hope and joy and to remember the story of one humble life that lifted the sights of humanity.

Santa, thanks for coming. [*Laughter*] Glad you made it. I know you've got a lot of commitments this time of year. By the way, we have a lot of chimneys in the White House—[*laughter*]—if you're looking for something to do. I appreciate all our entertainers. Thanks for being here. This is a fantastic evening.

I want to thank Peter Nostrand, who is the chairman of the Christmas Pageant of Peace, and John Betchkal, all the members of the board. I appreciate Secretary of the Interior Gale Norton, other members of my Cabinet who are here. I appreciate the Members of Congress who have come.

I particularly want to give a special thanks to the National Parks Service Director Fran Mainella and all the good folks who work for the National Parks Service. Reverend Martin, thank you very much as well.

Christmas is a time to rejoice and to give thanks for the blessings of the season and for the blessings that surround us every day of the year. We also remember that we have a responsibility to help those in need. America is a compassionate and generous land, and acts of kindness toward others fulfill the spirit of the season.

As we approach Christmas in this time of war, we pray for freedom and justice and peace on Earth. In his Christmas Eve address to the Nation in 1941, Franklin Roosevelt said that "Against enemies who preach the principles of hate and practice them, we set our faith in human love, and in God's care for us and all men everywhere." We ask for God to watch over our men and women in uniform who are serving overseas. Their families miss them, hold a seat open for them, and pray for their safe return. America's military men and women stand for freedom, and they serve the cause of peace. Many of them are serving in distant lands tonight, but they are close to our hearts.

As an expression of our hope for peace and happiness in this Christmas season, we light the National Christmas Tree. Jackie, Melissa, and Jenna Kantor of Bethesda are with us here. They started "Project Backpack" to give children displaced by Hurricane Katrina new backpacks filled with books and toys and school supplies. These girls are an example of the compassion that is found in the hearts and souls of Americans everywhere, and they have shown how much good can be done when we reach out to help a neighbor in need. And so Laura and I now invite them to join us to turn on the lights.

And would you help turn on these lights, as well, by counting down. Five, four, three, two, one.

NOTE: The President spoke at 5:55 p.m. on the Ellipse at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to John J. Betchkal, president, Christmas Pageant of Peace; and Rev. Richard B. Martin, pastor, Church of the Nativity, Burke, VA.

Remarks on the National Economy
December 2, 2005

Thanks to good old-fashioned American hard work and productivity, innovation, and sound economic policies of cutting taxes and restraining spending, our economy continues to gain strength and momentum.

Our economy added 215,000 jobs for the month of November. We've added nearly 4½ million new jobs in the last 2½ years. Third-quarter growth of this year was 4.3 percent. That's in spite of the fact that we had hurricanes and high gasoline prices. The unemployment rate is 5 percent, and that's lower than the average for the 1970s, 1980s, and 1990s.

We have every reason to be optimistic about our economic future. I mean, when you think about the news that's come in—the jobs report, the recent report on strong economic growth, low inflation, strong productivity, lower gasoline prices, a strong housing market, increases in consumer confidence and business investment—our economic horizon is as bright as it's been in a long time.

The foundation for growth is strong. It's based upon low taxes and restrained Government spending, legal reform, incentives for saving and investment.

The small-business sector is vibrant. Most of the new jobs in America are created by the small-business sector, and our entrepreneurs are doing well. We got the best workforce in America—in the world. People are productive; they're hardworking. Our ingenuity and know-how and—is vibrant. This economy is in good shape.

We're not going to rest until every American who wants a job can find one. We're going to continue to work for good policies for our workers and our entrepreneurs. I'll continue to push for progrowth economic

policies, all aimed at making sure every American can realize the American Dream.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:45 a.m. in the Rose Garden at the White House. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of these remarks.

Statement on the Resignation of Andrew S. Natsios as Administrator of the United States Agency for International Development
December 2, 2005

Andrew Natsios has served as a key member of my administration for more than 4 years. He has exemplified the compassion and generosity of the American people and our deep commitment to helping and improving the lives of those who are suffering. Under his leadership, USAID has implemented important reforms and helped us combat AIDS and malaria, rebuild Afghanistan and Iraq, provide humanitarian aid in Sudan, and assist victims of the tsunami and the recent devastating earthquake in South Asia. I thank him for his dedicated service to our country, and I wish him and his family well.

The President's Radio Address
December 3, 2005

Good morning. Earlier this week, I visited Arizona and Texas to observe firsthand our efforts to protect our Southwest border. And I met with customs and border protection agents who are working tirelessly to enforce our laws and keep our borders secure.

Illegal immigration and border security are issues that concern Americans. We're a nation built on the rule of law, and those who enter the country illegally break the law. In communities near our border, illegal immigration strains the resources of schools, hospitals, and law enforcement. And it involves smugglers and gangs that bring crime to our neighborhoods. Faced with this serious challenge, our government's responsibility is clear: We're going to protect our borders.

Since I took office, we've increased funding for border security by 60 percent, and our border agents have caught and sent home more than 4.5 million illegal immigrants, including more than 350,000 with criminal records. Yet we must do more to build on this progress.

This week I outlined my comprehensive strategy to reform our immigration system. The strategy begins with a three-part plan to protect our borders. First, we will promptly return every illegal entrant we catch at our border with no exceptions. For illegal immigrants from Mexico, we are working to expand an innovative program called interior repatriation, in which those caught at the border are returned to their hometowns far from the border, making it more difficult for them to attempt another crossing. For non-Mexican illegal immigrants, we're changing the unwise policy of catch-and-release to a policy of catch-

and-return, and we're speeding up the removal process.

Second, we must fix weak and unnecessary provisions in our immigration laws, including senseless rules that require us to release illegal immigrants if their home countries do not take them back in a set period of time.

Third, we must stop people from crossing the border illegally in the first place. So we're hiring thousands more Border Patrol agents. We're deploying new technology to expand their reach and effectiveness, and we're constructing physical barriers to entry.

Comprehensive immigration reform also requires us to improve enforcement of our laws in the interior of our country, because border security and interior enforcement go hand in hand. In October, I signed legislation that more than doubled the resources for interior enforcement, so we'll increase the number of immigration enforcement agents and criminal investigators, enhance worksite enforcement, and continue to go after smugglers, gang members, and human traffickers. Our immigration laws apply across all of America, and we will enforce those laws throughout our land.

Finally, comprehensive immigration reform requires us to create a new temporary-worker program that relieves pressure on the border but rejects amnesty. By creating a legal channel for willing employers to hire willing workers, we will reduce the number of workers trying to sneak across the border, and that would free up law enforcement officers to focus on criminals, drug dealers, terrorists, and others who mean us harm.

This program would not create an automatic path to citizenship, and it would not provide amnesty. I oppose amnesty. Rewarding lawbreakers would encourage others to break the law and keep pressure on our border. A temporary-worker program will relieve pressure on the border and help us more effectively enforce our immigration laws.

Our Nation has been strengthened by generations of immigrants who became Americans through patience, hard work, and assimilation. In this new century, we must continue to welcome legal immigrants and help them learn the customs and values that unite all Americans, including liberty and civic responsibility, equality under God, tolerance for others, and the English language. In the coming months, I look forward to working with Congress on comprehensive immigration reform that will enforce our laws, secure our border, and uphold our deepest values.

Thank you for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 7:03 a.m. on December 2 in the Cabinet Room at the White House for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on December 3. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on December 2 but was embargoed for release until the broadcast. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of this address.

Remarks at the Kennedy Center Honors Reception
December 4, 2005

Please be seated. Thanks for coming, and welcome to the White House. The annual reception for the Kennedy Center Honors is always a memorable event, and Laura and I are happy you all could join us. We extend a special welcome to this year's honorees and to their families and friends.

The Kennedy Center Honors are presented for exceptional accomplishment in the performing arts. Once again, the Center

has selected five extraordinary Americans for this high distinction. Each of these honorees, in a lifetime of achievement, has set a standard of excellence that is admired throughout the world. All of them have earned a unique place in the cultural life of the United States and a special respect among their fellow Americans.

The first Kennedy Center Honors were presented in 1978 to a group that included the eminent choreographer, George Balanchine. And on that stage that evening, dancing in tribute was the great Suzanne Farrell. Together, Balanchine and Farrell gave the world of ballet one of the rarest and most successful collaborations in history. He created masterpieces just for her, and no one epitomizes the style and grace of Balanchine choreography as much as Suzanne Farrell.

She first came to New York from Cincinnati. And only after a year at the American School of Ballet, she made her professional debut in 1961. Before long, word began to circulate there was something new—someone new, someone very special at the New York City Ballet. When she took the stage as Dulcinea in Don Quixote, she became a sensation. In that performance, a reviewer said, Suzanne Farrell was "absolutely flawless, technically impeccable, light as a bubble, perfect in line and style."

In hundreds of performances over a 28-year period, Suzanne Farrell was never known to depart from that standard. This was a ballerina who had it all, grace, strength, and the ability to act, turn, and jump with perfection. During classes, Balanchine often coached dancers with three words: "Do like Suzanne." [*Laughter*]

In performances as diverse as "Agon," "Theme and Variations," "Scotch Symphony," and "Clarinade," she had a mesmerizing effect on her audiences. Watching her was said to be "one of the sublime theatrical experiences of an era." One admirer said that Suzanne was a dancer who "made audiences sweat." This remarkable lady is now guiding a new generation of dancers as the leader of the Suzanne Farrell Ballet.

In the words of one of her dancers, Suzanne "inspires you. You want to give her everything you have because she meets you each step of the way." She does this every day with the spirit and the patience and the kindness of a truly lovely woman. She is widely appreciated as the greatest ballerina this country has produced, and the United States of America is proud to honor Suzanne Farrell.

Julie Harris discovered very early in life she loved to act, and the world discovered that she was better at the craft than almost anyone else. Fifty years ago, when her beautiful face was on the cover of Time magazine, the story inside offered the confident and accurate prediction that she would be a star "for the rest of her life."

Julie Harris has excelled in every forum she has attempted, from historical drama to tragedy, to musical comedy, to Shakespeare. She is known for one of the most hauntingly loving—lovely voices in theater, and she stands nearly alone in the depth and range of her talent. She became a star on Broadway at age 24, playing a 12-year-old girl in "The Member of the Wedding," and was nominated for an Oscar when she played the same role for film. Whatever age or personality or struggle the role calls for, Julie Harris can fill it, with meaning and feeling and complete believability. She has thrilled audiences as St. Joan of Arc and Mary Todd Lincoln and Florence Nightingale, Queen Victoria, and Emily Dickinson.

Her greatest admirers, perhaps, are her fellow actors. Boris Karloff said Julie "is always in complete control of herself, just as a fine pianist is always the master of his music." The screen pioneer, Ethel Barrymore, put it even more simply. She said, "The girl can do anything." [*Laughter*]

The most respected actress in American theater has received five Tony Awards—more than any other performer—plus a

Special Tony Award for Lifetime Achievement in the Theatre. She has also won a Grammy and three Emmys and has appeared in many television plays and motion pictures. In her career, Julie Harris has starred with Robert Redford, George C. Scott, Lauren Bacall, Shelley Winters, and Sir Lawrence Olivier. She's the girl who appeared opposite James Dean in the "East of Eden."

Julie Harris has been called Broadway's "tiniest tower of strength," a woman of deep intelligence and discipline. She is known, as well, for her gentle spirit. As one stage manager put it, Julie Harris is "an angel—everyone loves her." It's hard to imagine the American stage without the face, the voice, and the limitless talent of Julie Harris. She has found happiness in her life's work, and we thank her for sharing that happiness with the whole world.

There was a time when Robert Redford thought his life's work might be as a baseball player. [*Laughter*] Well, he went to college on an athletic scholarship, but his interests soon turned to the arts and eventually to acting. Years later, when he was hitting home runs as the character, Roy Hobbs, a reviewer of the film said this: "Robert Redford reminds those who need reminding that he is one of the perfect male film stars, extraordinarily handsome, effortlessly fascinating, and enormously talented. His role here gives us ample chance to see another kind of 'natural' in his element."

For more than four decades, Robert Redford has been one of America's most watchable and credible actors. From early appearances and televised plays and on Broadway, he moved easily into the film and into film history. We all remember his finest dramatic roles, with Barbra Streisand in "The Way We Were," with his notebook in "All the President's Men," on the election trail in "The Candidate," and in the Utah wilderness as "Jeremiah Johnson." Paired with Paul Newman in two legendary films, Robert Redford also proved to be an actor with flawless comic timing, and he earned an Oscar nomination for his role in "The Sting."

In his capacity to grow and to excel as an artist, Robert Redford has shown very few limitations. In 1980, he decided to try working behind the camera. The result was "Ordinary People," and it won him the Oscar for best actor [director]. * Soon afterward, he founded a workshop for independent American filmmakers at Sundance, which has done so much to encourage and teach emerging filmmakers.

Robert Redford is a public-spirited man, a Westerner who cares about the issues. He knows what he believes, and he's not afraid to tell people. [*Laughter*] Over the years, he's had a strong influence on public policy. [*Laughter*] And it doesn't hurt—[*laughter*]—and it doesn't hurt that he's quite a charismatic guy. [*Laughter*] One time, he found himself speaking in front of a group of people in a profession he didn't think too much of. So he stepped to the mike and gave them a piece of his mind. When he finished, one of the people that he had just scolded rushed right up and said, "Did you really make the jump off the cliff in 'Butch Cassidy'?" [*Laughter*]

When Robert Redford speaks, you hear more than an actor or director. You hear the voice of an active, passionate, committed citizen. His family can be proud that this man they love is one of the most familiar faces in the world, one of the biggest names in movies, and an alltime favorite of his fellow Americans. Congratulations.

Tina Turner's life began in Tennessee in a town called Nutbush. [*Laughter*] I've never been there, but—[*laughter*]—I've passed a few sign wavers who apparently want me to know about it. [*Laughter*] As a girl, she worked in the cotton fields and sang in the church choir. In her amazing journey, Tina Turner went on to sell tens of millions of records and earned a place in the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame.

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* White House correction.

She's written music classics and a best-selling book. And a movie about her life was nominated for two Oscars. As a performer, Tina Turner is known to "transcend age, gender, race, and social status." On one of her tour stops in Texas, a concert reviewer described an audience that included "college students, and biker chicks wearing jeans and leather vests, ten-gallon-hat-wearing cowboys, and finger-snapping grandpas." [*Laughter*] Everyone was there for the same reason—to see one of the greatest live entertainers ever to come out of the United States.

Tina Turner, it has been said, "commands that stage with the sheer force of her full-throttle voice and magnetic presence." People stand in wonder at the natural skill, the energy and sensuality, and the most famous legs in show business. [*Laughter*] Behave yourself. [*Laughter*]

Her voice has been described as combining "Otis Redding's husky break and James Brown's growl with some of Aretha Franklin's soaring cadences." She moves better and faster than dancers less than half her age; she does it all in four-inch high heels. [*Laughter*]

She first became a star in the "Ike and Tina Turner Revue." She made music history with a rendition of "Proud Mary" that no artist could ever hope to match. It won the Grammy and still wins her fans.

In the 1970s, the brave lady had to start over again, on her own. It was a hard time. All she owned in the world was her stage name and her God-given talent. These, combined with her persevering character, led to a phenomenal solo career. A single album, "Private Dancer," sold more than 12 million copies, and the year it was released won her three Grammys. She has produced a string of hits that are familiar across the world, including "What's Love Got To Do With It?" and "Simply The Best." She has played before some of the largest concert crowds ever assembled, and each time, every eye is trained on the stage, not wanting to miss a single note or a single move by this electrifying artist.

There's nobody quite like Tina Turner, and in the arc of her life, there is so much to admire—the incredible musical gifts, the inner strength, and the moral courage. She's a woman of achievement and elegance and class. And it's an honor to welcome you to the White House.

Tony Bennett once said, "What I try to do is give a performance and have everybody say, 'God, I love that song.' " Well, he's known that satisfaction throughout his career. When you hear the title of a Tony Bennett song, all at once you can hear the man singing it—"Fly Me to the Moon," "The Good Life," "The Best Is Yet To Come," "Just in Time."

This son of New York made his singing debut as a little boy in 1936, standing beside Mayor LaGuardia at the opening of the Triborough Bridge. Much time has passed, and at this point, the Triborough Bridge is showing some age. [*Laughter*] The little boy who sang that day is still looking pretty good. [*Laughter*]

Perhaps his biggest professional break came in the late 1940s, when he was opening for Pearl Bailey in Greenwich Village, and she introduced him to Bob Hope. When he learned this young man's name was Anthony Dominick Benedetto, Mr. Hope said, "That's too long for the marquee, let's simplify it and call you Tony Bennett."

Soon he was one of the great nightclub singers, performing through the years with the likes of Duke Ellington and Count Basie and appearing on the "Tonight Show" as Johnny Carson's first guest. When Tony recorded "I Left My Heart in San Francisco," he won his first Grammy, and the song took him from the clubs to Carnegie Hall. From that day to this, he's been playing to sellout crowds. He's won a total of 11 Grammys and a lifetime achievement award.

And it's a symbol of his endurance that this man who was making records when

Harry Truman lived in the White House has become a favorite of the MTV generation. As one newspaper declared, "Tony Bennett has not just bridged the generation gap, he demolished it." [*Laughter*] The vocal style and interpretive skill of Tony Bennett are without equal. And no other singer is held in higher regard by his fellow entertainers. B.B. King once said, "To be near him is a highlight of my life. I've met two Presidents in office; I've met the Pope, Pavarotti—and Tony Bennett." [*Laughter*] Frank Sinatra declared that Tony Bennett was the best singer in his lifetime.

His vocal talent and love for music came from his dad, John Benedetto, who passed away when Tony was 10 years old. In his memoir, Tony writes that John was a "very poetic man, full of love and warmth, who sang with a gentle, sensitive voice I can still hear." Tony's mom, Anna, undoubtedly saw those same qualities in her son. He called her, "my one guiding star." And in a long life, Anna watched her boy rise to the top and remain there.

Tony Bennett is also a very talented painter whose work is widely exhibited and admired. He's a deeply committed humanitarian. He's a man of character who served in the U.S. Army in World War II, and he marched for civil rights with Martin Luther King, Jr.

Of his career, Tony Bennett has said, "The audience has been beautiful to me." And the sentiment is entirely mutual. Everybody likes the man. He's been aptly described as "the kind of celebrity who cabdrivers call by his first name." We're joyful that he remains a friendly presence in American life, an entertainer still at the top of his game, and a voice we love to hear. Tonight our Nation honors Mr. Tony Bennett.

Each of these honorees has enriched our culture and reflected credit on our great country. It's a true pleasure to be in their company and to let them know just how much they mean to the people of the United States. Congratulations. Thanks for coming.

NOTE: The President spoke at 5:13 p.m. on the State Floor at the White House.

Remarks at the Children's Holiday Reception
December 5, 2005

The President. Thanks for coming. Welcome. We're glad you're here. This is Laura; I'm George W. [*Laughter*] We hope you've had some fun here. I hope nobody pinched Rudolph on the nose. [*Laughter*] No, nobody did. That's good—Rudolph is happy about that too. [*Laughter*]

We welcome the students from Stratford Landing Elementary School in Alexandria and Glen Haven Elementary School in Silver Spring. We're glad you all are here. We want to welcome your teachers and your parents. Thanks for coming. We're glad you're at the White House.

I particularly want to welcome those of you here who have got a mom or dad serving our country in the United States military. I know it's hard when they're away; this has got to be a difficult time for you. But we really want you to know that they're doing important work. They're not only protecting the country, but they're helping other boys and girls live in freedom like we do here in the United States, and that's important. So one message I want to give you is, we're really proud of your mom or dad, and you tell them thanks—thanks on behalf of a grateful nation.

And now I get to introduce somebody I'm grateful for, and that's the First Lady of the United States, Laura Bush.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:30 a.m. on the State Floor at the White House. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of the First Lady.

Remarks on the National Economy in Kernersville, North Carolina
December 5, 2005

Thanks for having me. Thanks for letting me come by to John Deere-Hitachi. I'm here to talk about our economy. No better place to talk about our economy, in a place where people are working hard and where they're productive, where they're making a product people want. The economy of the United States is strong, and I'm here—how we're going to work together to keep it stronger.

First, I want to thank the workers of this facility for letting me come by to interrupt your work day. I'll try to keep my comments brief so you can get back to work. [*Laughter*] I appreciate the job you're doing. This is a remarkable facility, a facility of high technology, of good management, and great, skilled workers.

I appreciate being back in the State of North Carolina. I was somewhat disappointed to learn that North Carolina is the best place to do business in the United States—I thought that might have been Texas. [*Laughter*]

I'm traveling today with the Secretary of the Treasury, John Snow. Mr. Secretary, thank you for joining us. Secretary of Commerce Carlos Gutierrez is with me today. These two men are involved with making sure that this economy stays strong, that we create an environment for people to be able to grow their businesses and employ people.

I'm proud to be here with Senator Richard Burr of the great State of North Carolina. He's a good, down-to-earth fellow who is a strong Member of the United States Senate. And he brings—every time I see him, he brings this message, he says, "You make sure you remember the people of North Carolina." Which I do.

I appreciate Congresswoman Virginia Foxx—we're right here in her congressional district—she's doing an excellent job on behalf of the people of this part of the world. I appreciate my longtime friend Congressman Howard Coble from the State of North Carolina. Finally, I'm proud to be traveling with a Congressman who doesn't look old enough to be a Congressman—[*laughter*]—that's Patrick McHenry, and he's doing a fine job, as well, in the United States Congress.

I want to thank the mayor of Kernersville for joining us. I appreciate all the other State and local officials.

I want to thank Ron Morrison for the—he's the operation manager, in case you've never heard of him—for giving me a tour. He's sure proud of this facility. He's proud of the safety record, and he's proud of the skill of the people who work here. I appreciate Al Seeba, Jim Jenkins, and Hitoshi Manabe. Thank you all for having me.

Government does not create wealth. American and businesses and workers and farmers and entrepreneurs create the wealth for this country. And so the role of the Government is to create an environment where the small business can grow into a big business, where the entrepreneur can flourish, where people who dream about owning a home are able to own a home. In our economy, our most precious

resource is the talent of the American worker, and there is no limit to what we can do when people have the freedom to make a better life for themselves and their family.

Ours is a confident and optimistic nation, and our trust in the American people has brought us through some pretty tough times. In the past 5 years, our economy has endured a stock market collapse, a recession, terrorist attacks, corporate scandals, high energy costs, and devastating natural disasters. These were all shocks to our economy, which I felt required decisive action. I believe that economy grows when people are allowed to keep more of their own money, to be able to save and to spend.

And so I called on the United States Congress to let the people keep more of their own money, to cut their taxes. And Congress responded. We lowered your taxes and gave you an opportunity to keep more of what you earn and let you decide how best to spend your own money. We cut taxes on families by lowering the tax rates and by doubling the child credit and reducing the marriage penalty. I felt we shouldn't penalize marriage; I thought we ought to reward marriage in the Tax Code.

These cuts are making a real difference to American families. I just met one of your coworkers, Kirby Hartsell. Kirby is an Air Force veteran; he did a tour in South Korea. He and his wife, Carol, have three children, Olivia, David, and Claire. When we cut the taxes, the Hartsells received a refund check that they put in the bank for themselves and to save for their children. This year, the Hartsells saved $2,200 on their 2004 Federal taxes because of our tax cuts. Now, I know some in Washington say that's not a lot of money—well, it's a lot of money to the Hartsells. And when the folks in Washington, DC, say that our working families don't need that tax relief, they ought to come right here to North Carolina and talk to the Hartsells, just like I did.

We not only reduced the taxes on individuals and families; we cut the taxes on dividends and capital gains to encourage job-creating investment. I understand most new jobs in America—and I hope you understand this too—most new jobs in America are created by small-business owners. And so we cut the taxes. We cut the taxes for our small businesses. Most small businesses pay taxes at the individual income tax rate. And so when you hear us talking about lowering the taxes on individuals, I want you to connect that with lowering taxes on small businesses. And we created incentives for small businesses to invest in new equipment so that they can expand and create jobs. To help our farmers and entrepreneurs pass on a lifetime of hard work to their loved ones, we put the death tax on the road to extinction.

Now, some of those people up in Washington said the tax cuts wouldn't work. In the spring of 2003, one Democrat leader called tax relief a tragedy and said it would not create jobs or grow the economy. Another Democratic leader said the tax cuts "are ruining our economy and costing us jobs." All that comes with the job, by the way—doing what you think is right, and people laying out the criticism. But I want to remind people of the facts: Since those words were spoken, our economy has added nearly 4½ million new jobs.

Just this past Friday, the latest figures show our economy added 215,000 jobs in the month of November alone. Our unemployment rate is down to 5 percent. That's lower than the average of the 1970s, the 1980s, and 1990s. The latest numbers also show the economy grew at 4.3 percent last quarter. And it has been growing at near that average for more than 2 years. This economy of ours is on the move. People are being able to find work, and that's what's important to me. I want Americans working. I want anybody who wants a job to be able to find work—good paying, steady work—and that's what's happening in America.

Americans are buying homes, and that's good news for this country. We hit an all-time high in October, in terms of home buying. More Americans now own their homes than any time in our Nation's history. Minority ownership—homeownership is at an alltime high in the United States of America. Real disposable income is up. Our consumers are confident. New orders for durable goods like machinery have risen sharply, and shipments of manufactured goods are up as well. Business activity in our manufacturing sector reported its 30th straight month of growth. In the past 5 years, productivity has grown at some of the fastest rates since the 1960s. Our small businesses are thriving. Fortunately, I didn't listen to the pessimists about tax cuts. The tax cuts are working.

We've been wise with your money as well. Each year I've been in office, we've cut the rate of growth in nonsecurity discretionary spending. We're on track to reach our goal of cutting the budget deficit in half by 2009. Thanks to tax relief and spending restraint and progrowth economic policies, this economy is strong, businesses are booming, and the people in this country are working. See, we can't take this growth for granted. So we're moving forward with a comprehensive agenda that's going to keep the economy growing, to make sure people have got a hopeful future. Keeping this economy strong begins with a commitment to keeping your taxes low and, at the same time, being wise about how we spend your money.

Unfortunately, just as we're seeing the evidence of how our tax cuts have helped the economy, we're hearing some voices in Washington that want to raise your taxes. The tax relief we set—that we delivered is set to expire in a couple of years. In other words, it's not permanent; it can go away. And unless Congress acts, you're going to get a big tax hike when that happens.

Some even say, "We should repeal the tax relief sooner." If that happens, a family of four making $60,000 today would see their Federal income taxes eventually go up by more than 50 percent. I want you to think about that. As you work hard and balance your family budgets and try to save for the future, back in Washington some folks want to take more out of your paycheck by rolling back the tax cuts. When you hear people say that we don't need to make the tax relief permanent, what they're really saying is, they're going to raise your taxes. One way to keep this economy growing is to have certainty in our Tax Code and to help you keep—and to keep—let you keep more of your paycheck, and so the United States Congress needs to make this tax relief permanent.

We're going to redouble our efforts to restrain the spending appetite of the Federal Government. Listen, we're at war, and we're going to spend what it takes to support our troops in harm's way. And that means we've got to show real discipline in other areas of the Federal budget.

Earlier this year, I submitted a budget that proposed an actual cut in nonsecurity discretionary spending. It's the most disciplined budget proposal since Ronald Reagan was in the White House, and Congress is set to meet this target, and I appreciate their hard work. I also proposed to terminate or reduce more than 150 Government programs that are underperforming or not meeting needs of the American people. I'm pleased to report it looks like the Congress is poised to deliver savings on more than 90 of these programs. For the first time since 1997, Congress is poised to deliver more than $35 billion in savings in entitlement programs. By taking action to restrain spending, we're on our track to cut that deficit in half by 2009.

But there's a lot of work that needs to be done. In the long term, the most significant deficits will occur as baby boomers retire and more people receive Social Security and Medicare benefits. There's unfunded liabilities in our Social Security and Medicare systems. That means that there's

a lot of baby boomers retiring who have been promised more benefits with fewer people paying into the system. That's what that means. And unless we do something about it—these unfunded liabilities—we're going to put a great burden on our children and our grandchildren.

Reform of Social Security and Medicare is an important issue for the American people. And I've been talking about it, and I'm going to keep talking about it, because I strongly believe the United States Congress has an obligation to do something about it. My attitude is, when you get elected to office in Washington, DC, you have an obligation to confront problems, not pass them on to future generations and future Congresses.

Our approach on spending is clear: Working families have to set priorities for their spending, and so should the Federal Government. Unfortunately, we have too many politicians back in Washington who preach fiscal discipline while voting against spending cuts—and too many who think the only answer for runaway spending is to raise your taxes. My solution is to keep your taxes low and to be fiscally sound about how we use your money.

As we think about ways to make sure this economy remains strong today and strong tomorrow, one thing we've got to work on is our energy. I mean, we've got to be less dependent on foreign sources of energy if we want this economy to remain vibrant. High gasoline and heating costs are a tax on the working people, and they're a tax on small businesses, and they drain the budgets of people working hard. They make it expensive for people to run their companies, and they both affect our economic and national security. So our goal is to work for a day in which America is no longer dependent, beginning with less dependent on foreign sources of energy.

We made a pretty good start with an energy bill I signed this summer. It encourages conservation, and that makes sense. One way to become less dependent on foreign sources of energy is to use less of it. We made—we're spending money on making sure we can burn coal in a clean way. Clean coal technologies make a lot of sense. We've got a lot of coal in the United States of America, and we need to figure out how to use it cleanly. We need to do a better job of making sure we can get natural gas from overseas, liquified natural gas into the United States. We don't have enough liquified natural gas portals to allow that gas to come here, and we need to expand that in the United States.

We're promoting renewable sources of energy like ethanol and biodiesel. It makes sense to be able to use corn or soybeans to power our automobiles. I mean, one of these days, hopefully, the President sits down, opens up the crop report and says, "My, we've got a lot of corn; it means we're less dependent on foreign sources of energy." It makes sense to explore that. We're spending money on hydrogen. One of these days, I hope your grandchildren or your children can start a car and have hydrogen being the source of power.

So we've got a good bill on the table that I signed. But we've got to do more. We've got to do more. Listen, Katrina hit us, and Rita hit us, and we realize how dependent and how fragile our infrastructure is when it comes to gasoline. Listen, your prices went up. I know that. And these storms show that we've got bottlenecks in the system, and there are shortages. Now, fortunately, today's gasoline prices are down nearly to what they were before Katrina and Rita, and that's good news. But we ought to take notice of what happened. Congress needs to pass legislation that will allow us to build and expand refineries. Do you realize we have not built a new refinery in the United States since the early 1970s? In order to take the pressure off your pocketbook, it seems to make sense to me that we need to expand the amount of supply of gasoline. The more gasoline there is available for our consumers, the less pressure there will be.

We've got to produce and refine more crude oil and natural gas here at home in environmentally sensitive ways. And we can do that. The most promising site for energy in America is the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge in Alaska. I don't know if you realize this, but technology today enables us to take a very small portion of the land—2,000 acres out of 19 million acres—and use that 2,000-acre site to exploit the oil and gas resources in that vast area, with little or no impact on the land or wildlife. And that's important for people to understand, the facts involved. Developing this tiny area could yield up to a million barrels of oil a day. That's a million barrels of oil a day less from a foreign source of energy. I can't tell you how important I think it is for the United States Congress to authorize a progrowth, projob, proenvironment exploration of ANWR.

We prosper as a country when our working people can look to the future with confidence. And people are more confident when they own something. And that's why I've promoted an ownership society, an ownership society in which people own their own homes and have control over their health care accounts. They can own their own small businesses. Americans need to know that their hard work will be rewarded and that the institutions they depend upon are reliable. And so I want to talk about some reforms and some ideas for job training and health care.

We need to prepare Americans to take advantage of the opportunities of the 21st century. One thing is certain, is that this economy of ours changes, and as it changes, we've got to make sure the workers have got the skills necessary to fill the jobs of the 21st century. It's one of the real challenges of our society.

I'm a big believer, by the way, in community centers—community colleges. I think they work. I think they work well, because they are available, and they're affordable, and they have got flexibility in their curriculum. I know that firsthand, that you've got a good system here in North Carolina because I've been to some of your community colleges. I've been to Forsyth Technical Community College. I've seen workers who were in the textile industry receiving help necessary to go back to school to become health care workers. And with a little bit of Government help, they are able to gain new skills and find permanent work at better pay. And that's really the challenge ahead of us, isn't it, to make sure that we match our workers' desire to work with the skills necessary to fill the jobs of the 21st century.

We've got a good program out of Washington, DC. It's $125 million a year in grants to help community colleges. More importantly, it's to help the workers going to community colleges. I'm working with Congress to make sure that we work with these schools that are developing curriculum for jobs which actually exist. We don't need people being trained for work where jobs don't exist; we need people being able to match the job demand with the curriculum. And it's happening. Congress needs to renew the job training program for our community college system and give us more flexibility to make sure that the money actually gets to the workers, not to the bureaucracies involved with the program.

We need a health care system that makes sure that health care is available and affordable for all our people. And we need a health care system that puts patients in charge of the health care decisions, that offers greater choice, and allows you to have control over your plan. There's a new product called health savings accounts, HSAs, and they're a step toward consumer-driven health care.

Now, let me try to explain this to you. Under this type of plan, you or your employer can put money tax-free into what they call a health savings account. And you use that money in your account for routine medical expenses. And if you don't use it all up, you can roll it over to the next

year, tax free. And the money in the account earns interest tax-free. In other words, it's a tax-free account. The money goes in tax-free. It stays in tax-free, and it comes out tax-free. And it's your money, and you control it, and you pay routine health care expenses.

And you couple that with a high-deductible insurance policy—paid by yourself, if you're self-employed, or your company—that pays for catastrophic care above a certain deductible if you get really sick or you get really hurt. Now, the advantage of this program is that, one, you make the decisions. Secondly, you own the HSA, and if you happen to change jobs—listen, we're in a society where people are changing jobs. And one of the uncertainty that comes with job changes is that you—a fellow or a woman worries about health care. Under this plan, it's your own health care plan, and you can take it with you to your next employer. And the employer can help you with your HSA, if that's the deal you're able to strike with them. In other words, if you own your health care plan, it brings certainty into your life. It makes your future more stable.

These high-deductible policies have lower premiums, and that's what you've got to know, which provide savings for the self-employed or the small-business owner or for the large company. People are beginning to understand the advantages of health savings accounts. Since I signed a bill into law that allowed for the existence of health savings accounts, a million Americans have enrolled, most are families with children. And nearly 40 percent of HSA owners were uninsured before they got their account. Now, we're going to strengthen health savings accounts, make them more available and more affordable so people have more choices when it comes to health care.

Now, that's just one part of a comprehensive health initiative. Congress needs to pass association health plans. I don't know if there's any small-business owners here—small businesses sometimes have trouble affording health care. They need to be allowed to pool risk across jurisdictional boundaries so they can buy health insurance at the same discounts that big companies are able to buy health insurance.

The Federal Government has a responsibility to the elderly and the poor when it comes to health care. That's a commitment our Government made. My attitude is, if you're going to provide health care for the elderly, it ought to be good health care. That's why we had the most substantive reforms of Medicare since Lyndon Baines Johnson was the President, since the program was formed. The Medicare plan that is now available for our seniors includes prescription drug coverage and a wide variety of choices for our seniors to choose from. And it's going to become available this January, and if you've got a mother and father on Medicare, I strongly urge you to look on the Internet for medicare.gov, and take a look and explain to your mother or father the options available. It's a good deal. It makes sense to have a modern, reformed Medicare system for our seniors.

We're going to take care of the poor with Medicaid and to make sure there's a strong safety net available for the poor citizens in the United States. And we're going to be wise about how we set up systems. Since I took office, we've opened or expanded more than 800 community health centers, places for the poor and the indigent to get primary health care. It makes sense to make sure that people go to a primary care facility, such as a health center, and not an emergency room of a hospital.

We need to expand information technology in health care, which a lot of the experts are convinced will lower the cost of health care to the American citizens. To make health care available and affordable, we need medical liability reform. When your doctors get sued, it means there's going to be fewer doctors practicing medicine, and when your doctors get sued, it

means your cost of medicine goes up. And for the sake of affordable health care, we need medical liability reform now. In order to make sure the economy is—keeps going on, we need a comprehensive health care agenda that gives you the power for making medical decisions, not bureaucracies in Washington, DC.

Now, for the good of the workers, we need to strengthen the rules governing private pensions as well. You know, most Americans work for private companies that offer traditional pensions. And most companies, like this one, are fulfilling their obligations to their employees and their retirees. But too many companies are not putting away the cash they need to fund the retirement promises they're making to their employees. In other words, they're saying, "We'll make sure you got a retirement system," but they're not funding it. Therefore, when—if the company were to get into financial trouble and go bankrupt, their failure to live up to their promises, their failure to fund their pensions will leave retirees with pension checks that have been slashed.

Now, the Federal Government insures these pensions, and that means that if more and more companies fail to meet their responsibilities, the Federal Government might have to step in and bail them out. In that case, it would not only be the retirees who are harmed by the companies not fulfilling their obligations, but it can mean the taxpayers as well. Every American has an interest in seeing to it that this system gets fixed. So whether you're a worker at a company with an underfunded pension or a taxpayer, it's what I want you to understand.

In our society, we've had some companies—big companies go bankrupt, and workers at those companies know what I'm talking about. And so my message to corporate America is: You need to fulfill your promises. When you say to a worker, this is what they're going to get when they retire, you better put enough money in the account to make sure the worker gets that which you said.

The Government's current pension rules are confusing and misleading. They allow companies to technically play by the rules and yet still not fund the promises they've made to their employees. And so Congress needs to straighten up these rules so that there's no confusion, so that everybody understands what I just said. I said, "If you make a promise to a worker, you put enough money in the account to fulfill that promise."

So we proposed reforms to the pension rules that say this, that say that companies must accurately measure and report the financial status of their pension plans to make sure they're fulfilling the promises they make. This reform plan would give companies that underfund their pensions 7 years to catch up. That seems reasonable to me. We're going to give you a little time to do what you said you're going to do, but you're going to do what you said you're going to do.

But some in Congress have said this reform is too tough, or some may be on the outskirts of Congress who have said the reform is too tough. And not only that, they want to weaken the current law even further. I believe that if you put in your hours, your pension should be there for you when you retire. Our workers need reform that significantly improves funding for these private pension plans, not a piece of legislation that weakens it. And I'm not going to sign a bill that weakens pension funding for the American workers.

And, finally, keeping this economy strong means welcoming opportunities that a global economy offers, not fearing those opportunities. And this country is home to about 5 percent of the world's population, which means that 95 percent of potential customers live abroad. By opening up new markets for our goods and our farm products and our services, we can help this

economy continue to grow and create opportunity for people right here in our country.

Out in Washington, there are economic isolationists, people who are afraid of new opportunities. I think they've got to have more faith in the American worker and in the entrepreneur. The folks in North Carolina are showing them why. Today, one of every 12 jobs in North Carolina is exported by—is supported by exports. In other words, one in 12 of the people who work in this State do so because they're selling a product overseas. And it's just not what you're sending overseas that is helping North Carolina grow; more than 200,000 North Carolinians have jobs because foreign companies have chosen to invest in the Tar Heel State. In other words, this is a good place to be. All across America, we see the same story: Foreign businesses come here because they recognize the quality and the skill and ethic of the American worker. That's why they're coming.

This company is a good example of how trade has transformed American business. In 1837, an Illinois blacksmith named John Deere fashioned a steel plow that let pioneer farmers cut through prairie soil. Today, the company that this guy started ships products—ships combines made in Illinois to Russia. Interesting, isn't it? A lot of the Deere business is done overseas because the product is good. People want the Deere product. People realize that their society could become more productive if they use products made by John Deere.

You've got an advantage right here in Kernersville. You've got an interesting joint venture with Hitachi. This plant is actually "in-sourcing." Over the past 4 years, this factory has taken on production that used to be done in Japan and Mexico. You've tripled your workforce. That's what opening markets means. It means good, steady work. It means good opportunity. In the 21st century, no economy can afford to be an island. And to create new opportunities for our workers, we need to keep this economy open to trade and investment. And we've got to make sure that everybody else treats us the way we treat them, that we want to have free trade, and we want to have fair trade.

The textile industry in this State has been through tough times. I understand that. We just did a deal with Central America that says, "You treat us the way we treat you." Do you realize products going from the United States to Central America were taxed? Products coming the other way weren't. It seemed to make sense to level the playing field, which we're in the process of doing. But it also means that by working together with Central American partners, North Carolina textiles are more likely to be able to compete with Asian textiles.

My predecessor worked to get China into the WTO. And one of the conditions was that the United States and other WTO members would take steps to prevent their markets from being flooded with cheap Chinese textiles. Last month, we reached an agreement with China to have them meet that obligation under the textile agreements. It's an important agreement. It means that not only are we for free trade with China, but we expect China to be fair with American textile companies and American workers. This agreement adds certainty and predictability for businesses in both America and China.

Here's what I believe. I believe free trade is good for jobs. I believe opening markets for U.S. products is smart to do. I know we've got to make sure we have a level playing field because when we have a level playing field, the American worker, the American entrepreneur, and the American farmer can compete with anybody, anytime, anyplace.

The greatest opportunity we do have to advance the goal of free and fair trade is through the Doha round of trade talks. The Doha trade round has great potential to boost jobs here in America. By reducing and eliminating tariffs and other barriers

on industrial goods and on farm goods—industrial goods like John Deere products, by the way—to end unfair subsidies and open up global markets for our services. Trade ministers will gather in Hong Kong next week for a critical meeting. I told our Trade Representative, Ambassador Rob Portman, that he's got to push for a bold and wide-ranging agreement. Opportunity increasingly depends on a free and fair trading global system, and our administration is going to continue to use our influence to bring greater opportunities for the American worker.

You know, throughout the last century, we often heard pessimists telling us that our best days are behind us and that the future belongs to others. Our grandparents heard the pessimists in the 1930s and 1940s say that the future belonged to the central planners. Our parents heard the pessimists again in the 1950s when the Soviet Union launched the first satellite. Some of us remember hearing the pessimists in the 1970s and 1980s when we were told that America was tired and could no longer compete with Japan. At that moment, Ronald Reagan's tax cuts were just beginning to kick in, and that set off one of the largest economic expansions in our history. One newspaper editorialized about "the stench of failure" during that period of time.

You know, the great thing about our history when you look at it is, the American people have always proved the pessimists wrong. At the start of a hopeful new century, the American worker is the most productive worker that human history has ever known. At the start of this new century, we have proven that progrowth economic policies out of Washington, DC, do work and can overcome some mighty obstacles. At the start of the century, we recommit ourselves to the notion that the more free people are, the better off your economy will be.

This great country of ours is a place where people can start out with nothing and be able to raise a family and own a home or start a business. Through all my travels around the world, I'm always struck by how bright the future of America is. Our job in Washington is to keep that future bright and hopeful by making choices that reward hard work and enterprise. This economy is strong, and the best days are yet to come for the American economy.

I'm honored you let me come by. I'm always glad to come back to North Carolina. And I'm particularly pleased to be with the good, fine folks right here at the Deere-Hitachi plant. May God bless you and your families, and may God continue to bless our country.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:08 p.m. at John Deere-Hitachi Construction Machinery Corp. In his remarks, he referred to Mayor Curtis L. Swisher of Kernersville, NC; and James R. Jenkins, senior vice president and general counsel, Deere & Co.

Remarks Following a Meeting With Director-General Lee Jong-wook of the World Health Organization and an Exchange With Reporters
December 6, 2005

President Bush. It's been my honor to welcome the Director of the World Health Organization, Dr. Lee, to the Oval Office, where we've just had an extensive conversation with high-ranking officials in my administration about the international strategy to deal with a possible pandemic of avian flu.

And I want to thank you, Dr. Lee, for staying on top of this issue, for raising the

consciousness of the world, for helping to develop an international response, and for working so closely with Mike Leavitt and Julie Gerberding and Bob Zoellick of the State Department. This is a remarkable collaborative effort to do our duty to help people.

The other thing that's really interesting, I found out, is Dr. Lee told me we're very close to eradicating polio. And I want to congratulate you—from the world, by the way—and I want to congratulate you for your good work on that issue.

Director-General Lee. Thank you.

President Bush. You're a good public servant. I'm just proud to welcome you here to the Oval Office.

Director-General Lee. Well, thank you very much. Clearly, we've been working on avian flu and pandemic flu for many years. But it really didn't take off until the President launched this initiative in September in New York. And then after that, he mentioned—he raised this issue with many head of state. That really made a difference. I'm very honored to be here.

And about polio eradication, it was a teamwork. I appreciated the effort of the United States, especially the AID and CDC. And in the presence of the Secretary and also the Director, Julie Gerberding, that it is wonderful to be able to say that we are about to eradicate polio.

President Bush. Thank you, Dr. Lee.

Answer a couple of questions. Nedra [Nedra Pickler, Associated Press].

Insurgency and Terrorist Attacks in Iraq

Q. Thank you, Mr. President. Insurgents in Iraq claim that they have taken a U.S. citizen hostage. We also have a U.S. peace activist who is being held. Is there anything you can do to get them back?

President Bush. We, of course, don't pay ransom for any hostages. What we will do, of course, is use our intelligence gathering to see if we can't help locate them. The best way to make sure that Iraq is a peaceful society is to continue to spread democracy. And clearly there are some there who want to stop the spread of democracy. There are terrorists there who will kill innocent people and behead people and kill children, terrorists who have got desires to hurt the American people.

And it should be—the more violent they get, the clearer the cause ought to be, that we're going to achieve victory in Iraq and that we'll bring these people to justice. We will hunt them down, along with our Iraqi friends, and at the same time, spread democracy.

Steve [Steve Holland, Reuters], yes.

Democracy Efforts in Iraq

Q. Sir, Howard Dean says the idea that the U.S. will win in Iraq is just plain wrong, and he's comparing the war to Vietnam. Is that a fair comparison, and what do you think about his comments?

President Bush. I know we're going to win, and our troops need to hear, not only are they supportive but that we have got a strategy that will win. Oh, there's pessimists, you know, and politicians who try to score points. But our strategy is one that is—will lead us to victory. The only thing that the enemy has got going for them is the capacity to take innocent life and to get on our TV screens with this devastation that they cause. These people cannot stand free societies. They have no regard for the human condition. They'll kill women and children at the drop of a hat, all aimed at frightening the American people and trying to get us to withdraw. And if we were to withdraw, the likes of Zarqawi, who is a sworn ally of bin Laden, would have a safe haven from which to plot and plan.

The lessons of September the 11th are lessons this country must never forget. We've got to take each threat seriously. We've got to stay on the offense. In the long run, a democracy will help eradicate the conditions that allow these people to find any kind of support.

And so our strategy is twofold. On the one hand, we'll stay on the offense. We'll train Iraqi soldiers so they can take the fight to the enemy. And on the other hand, we'll continue to work with the Iraqi people to spread democracy.

And the American people must take notice of the fact that the people of Iraq are showing incredible courage in the face of this violence. I mean, after all, there was an election last January to put a Transitional National Government in place; then they voted on a Constitution. And in a short period of time, they're going to be voting for a new government. They vote by the millions, which stands in stark contrast to the society in which they lived under the tyrant, Saddam Hussein, who, by the way, is now on trial, as he should be on trial.

I think his trial is indicative of the change that has taken place in the Iraqi society. In the old days, if Saddam and his cronies didn't like you, you didn't get a trial. You were just put to death or tortured. Today, there is a system, a judicial system in place that will give Saddam Hussein a chance to make his case in court, as well as giving those who have been tortured by Saddam Hussein a chance to step forth and provide witness to the brutality of this man.

I—our troops need to know that the American people stand with them, and we have a strategy for victory. And of course, there will be debate and, of course, there will be some pessimists and some people playing politics with the issue. But by far, the vast majority of people in this country stand squarely with the men and women who wear the Nation's uniform.

Carl [Carl Cameron, FOX News Channel].

Detention Facilities Abroad

Q. Thank you, Mr. President. Does your administration have any plans to change the policy of renditioning and/or the detention centers allegedly being placed in Europe?

President Bush. Carl, first of all, I don't talk about secret programs, covert programs, covert activities. Part of a successful war on terror is for the United States of America to be able to conduct operations, all aimed to protect the American people, covertly.

However, I can tell you two things: One, that we abide by the law of the United States; we do not torture. And two, we will try to do everything we can to protect us within the law. We're facing an enemy that would like to hit America again, and the American people expect us to, within our laws, do everything we can to protect them. And that's exactly what the United States is doing. We do not render to countries that torture. That has been our policy, and that policy will remain the same.

Thank you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:11 a.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Ronald Schultz and Tom Fox, American citizens taken hostage in Iraq; senior Al Qaida associate Abu Musab Al Zarqawi; and Usama bin Laden, leader of the Al Qaida terrorist organization. A reporter referred to Howard Dean, chairman, Democratic National Committee.

Remarks on Lighting the Hanukkah Menorah
December 6, 2005

Welcome to the White House. Laura and I are glad you're here, and we're glad to be here to celebrate the festival of Hanukkah. Hanukkah begins later this month. It's

a time to remember the story of a miracle once witnessed in the Holy Temple in Jerusalem.

More than 2,000 years ago, the ancient land of Israel was conquered, and Jewish people were forbidden to pray, observe their religious customs, or study the Torah. In response, a patriot named Judah Maccabee led a revolt against the enemy army. Their numbers were small, yet their courage in defense of their faith was powerful, and they were triumphant.

When the Maccabees returned to reclaim their Holy Temple, the oil that should have lasted only 1 day, instead burned for 8 days. During Hanukkah, Jews across the world signify this miracle by lighting the menorah. This act commemorates the victory of freedom over oppression and of hope shining through darkness. Today, that light still burns in Jewish homes and synagogues everywhere. And today, that light will burn here in the White House.

Laura and I are honored to have a beautiful menorah here from Park Synagogue in Cleveland, Ohio. Rabbi Skoff, thank you very much for sharing it with us. I also want to thank Rabbi Barry Gelman for his prayer and thank him for his deep compassion. As he mentioned, he is the rabbi from the United Orthodox Synagogues in Houston, whose members did so much to help the victims of Hurricane Katrina.

I want to thank the West Point Jewish Cadet Choir for being here with us this evening. Our Nation is grateful to the American troops of all faiths who are serving our country around the world and who are away from their families this holiday.

The word "Hanukkah" and the Hebrew word for education both come from the same root word that means "to dedicate." And earlier today, I met with some of the leaders from our Nation's Jewish day schools. As educators who dedicate themselves to teaching the faith and to teaching, they are fulfilling the true lesson of Hanukkah every day of the year. Just as the Maccabees reclaimed their Holy Temple, these teachers help ensure that Jewish traditions are passed from generation to generation.

Tonight as we prepare to light the candles, we are grateful for our freedoms as Americans, especially the freedom to worship. We are grateful that freedom is spreading to still new regions of the world, and we pray that those who still live in the darkness of tyranny will some day see the light of freedom.

And now I invite Rabbi Skoff and his daughter and family to join me for the symbolic lighting of the White House menorah. The honor is yours.

NOTE: The President spoke at 5:37 p.m. in the Bookseller's Area in the East Wing at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Rabbi Joshua Skoff, Park Synagogue, Cleveland Heights, Ohio, and his daughter, Eden.

Remarks to the Council on Foreign Relations
December 7, 2005

Thank you all. Richard, thanks for the invitation. Thanks for letting me come by and address the Council on Foreign Relations. The Council is one of America's oldest and most admired foreign policy organizations, and I appreciate the chance to come and talk about foreign policy.

Richard is a good man, and he's doing a fine job as the President of the Council on Foreign Relations. And I appreciate your service to the country. I want to thank Nancy Roman. I want to thank the board members of the Council. And I want to thank you all for being here today.

Today we mark the anniversary of a fateful day in American history. On December the 7th, 1941, our peaceful Nation awoke to an attack plotted in secret and executed without mercy. The strike on Pearl Harbor was the start of a long war for America—a massive struggle against those who attacked us and those who shared their destructive ambitions. Fortunately for all of us, a great generation of Americans was more than equal to the challenge. Our Nation pulled together, and despite setbacks and battlefield defeats, we did not waver in freedom's cause. With courage and determination, we won a war on two fronts. We liberated millions. We aided the rise of democracy in Europe and Asia. We watched enemies become allies, and we laid the foundation of peace for generations.

On September the 11th, 2001, our Nation awoke to another sudden attack. In the space of just 102 minutes, more Americans were killed than we lost at Pearl Harbor. Like generations before us, we accepted new responsibilities, and we confronted new dangers with firm resolve. Like generations before us, we're taking the fight to those who attacked us—and those who share their murderous vision for future attacks. Like generations before us, we've faced setbacks on the path to victory, yet we will fight this war without wavering. And like the generations before us, we will prevail.

Like earlier struggles for freedom, this war will take many turns, and the enemy must be defeated on every battlefront, from the streets of Western cities to the mountains of Afghanistan, to the tribal regions of Pakistan, to the islands of Southeast Asia, and the Horn of Africa. Yet the terrorists have made it clear that Iraq is the central front in their war against humanity. So we must recognize Iraq as the central front in the war on terror.

Last week at the Naval Academy, I gave the first in a series of speeches outlining our strategy for victory in Iraq. I explained that our strategy begins with a clear understanding of the enemy we face. The enemy in Iraq is a combination of rejectionists and Saddamists and terrorists. The rejectionists are ordinary Iraqis, mostly Sunni Arabs, who miss the privileged status they had under the regime of Saddam Hussein. They reject an Iraq in which they are no longer the dominant group. We believe that, over time, most of this group will be persuaded to support a democratic Iraq led by a Federal Government that is strong enough to protect minority rights.

The Saddamists are former regime loyalists who harbor dreams of returning to power, and they're trying to foment anti-democratic sentiment amongst the larger Sunni community. Yet they lack popular support, and over time, they can be marginalized and defeated by security forces of a free Iraq.

The terrorists affiliated with or inspired by Al Qaida are the smallest but most lethal group. Many are foreigners coming to fight freedom's progress in Iraq. They are led by a brutal terrorist named Zarqawi, Al Qaida's chief of operations in Iraq, who has pledged his allegiance to Usama bin Laden. The terrorists' stated objective is to drive the United States and coalition forces out of Iraq and to gain control of the country. They would then use Iraq as a base from which to launch attacks against America, overthrow moderate governments in the Middle East, and try to establish a totalitarian Islamic empire that reaches from Indonesia to Spain.

The terrorists in Iraq share the same ideology as the terrorists who struck the United States on September the 11th, blew up commuters in London and Madrid, murdered tourists in Bali, killed workers in Riyadh, and slaughtered guests at a wedding in Amman, Jordan. This is an enemy without conscience; they cannot be appeased. If we're not fighting and destroying the enemy in Iraq, they would not be leading the quiet lives of good citizens. They would be plotting and killing our citizens

across the world and within our own borders. By fighting the terrorists in Iraq, we are confronting a direct threat to the American people, and we will accept nothing less than complete victory.

We're pursuing a comprehensive strategy in Iraq. Last week, my administration released a document called the "National Strategy for Victory in Iraq." Our goal is victory, and victory will be achieved when the terrorists and Saddamists can no longer threaten Iraq's democracy, when the Iraqi security forces can provide for the safety of their own citizens, and when Iraq is not a safe haven for terrorists to plot new attacks against our Nation.

Our strategy to achieve that victory has three elements. On the political side, we're helping the Iraqis build inclusive democratic institutions that will protect the interests of all Iraqis. We're working with the Iraqis to help them engage those who can be persuaded to join the new Iraq and to marginalize those who never will. In 2½ years, the Iraqi people have made amazing progress. They've gone from living under the boot of a brutal tyrant to liberation to free elections to a democratic constitution. A week from tomorrow, they will go to the polls to elect a fully constitutional government that will lead them for the next 4 years. By helping Iraqis continue to build their democracy, we will gain an ally in the war on terror. By helping them build a democracy, we will inspire reformers from Damascus to Tehran. And by helping them build a democracy, we'll make the American people more secure.

On the security side, coalition and Iraqi security forces are on the offense against the enemy. We're clearing out areas controlled by the terrorists and Saddam loyalists, leaving Iraqi forces to hold territory taken from the enemy, and following up with targeted reconstruction to help Iraqis rebuild their lives. And as we fight the terrorists, we're working to build capable and effective Iraqi security forces, so they can take the lead in the fight and eventually take responsibility for the safety and security of their citizens without major foreign assistance.

As Iraqi forces become more capable, they're taking responsibility for more and more Iraqi territory. We're transferring bases for their control, to take the fight to the enemy. That means American and coalition forces can concentrate on training Iraqis and hunting down high-value targets like Zarqawi.

On the economic side, we're helping the Iraqis rebuild their infrastructure and reform their economy and build the prosperity that will give all Iraqis a stake in a free and peaceful Iraq. In doing this, we have involved the United Nations, other international organizations, our coalition partners, and supportive regional states.

A week ago at the Naval Academy, I spoke about our efforts to train the Iraqi security forces. I described the changes we've made in the way these forces are trained and the resulting gains the Iraqi forces have made in the past year. Today I'm going to talk about how we're working with those Iraqi forces and Iraq's leaders to improve security and restore order, to help Iraqis rebuild their cities, and to help the National Government in Baghdad revitalize Iraq's infrastructure and economy.

Over the course of this war, we have learned that winning the battle for Iraqi cities is only the first step. We also have to win the battle after the battle by helping Iraqis consolidate their gains and keep the terrorists from returning. Used to be that after American troops cleared the terrorists out of a city and moved onto the next mission, there weren't enough forces, Iraqi forces, to hold the area. We found that after we left, the terrorists would reenter the city, intimidate local leaders and police, and eventually retake control. This undermined the gains of our military. It thwarted our efforts to help Iraqis rebuild and led local residents to lose confidence in the process and in their leaders.

So we adjusted our approach. As improvements in training produced more capable Iraqi security forces, those forces have been able to better hold onto the cities we cleared out together. With help from our military and civilian personnel, the Iraqi Government can then work with local leaders and residents to begin reconstruction, with Iraqis leading the building efforts and our coalition in a supporting role.

This approach is working. And today I want to describe our actions in two cities where we have seen encouraging progress, Najaf and Mosul.

The city of Najaf is located about 90 miles south of Baghdad, and it's the home to one of Shi'a Islam's holiest places, the Imam Ali Shrine. As a predominantly Shi'a city, Najaf suffered greatly during Saddam's rule. Virtually every element of infrastructure and basic services had been crippled by years of insufficient maintenance. In 1991, thousands of Najaf residents were killed during a brutal crackdown by the dictator. Our troops liberated Najaf in 2003, yet about a year later, the city fell under the sway of a radical and violent militia. Fighting in the streets damaged homes and businesses, and the local economy collapsed as visitors and pilgrims stopped coming to the shrine out of fear for their lives.

In the summer of 2004, we discussed the growing problem in Najaf with Iraq's political leaders, and the coalition and Iraqi Government decided to retake control of the city. And we did. Together, coalition and Iraqi forces routed out the militia in tough, urban fighting. It was an intense battle. Our guys performed great, and so did the Iraqi forces. Together with the Iraqi Government and the Shi'a clerical community, we forced the militia to abandon the shrine and return it to legitimate Iraqi authority. The militia forces agreed to disarm and leave Najaf.

As soon as the fighting in Najaf ended, targeted reconstruction moved forward. The Iraqi Government played an active role and so did our military commanders and diplomats and workers from the U.S. Agency for International Development. Together, they worked with Najaf's Governor and other local officials to rebuild the local police force, repair residents' homes, refurbish schools, restore water and other essential services, reopen a soccer stadium, complete with new lights and fresh sod. Fifteen months later, new businesses and markets have opened in some of Najaf's poorest areas, religious pilgrims are visiting the city again, construction jobs are putting local residents back to work. One of the largest projects was the rebuilding of the Najaf Teaching Hospital, which had been looted and turned into a military fortress by the militia. Thanks to the efforts by Iraqi doctors and local leaders, and with the help of American personnel, the hospital is now open and capable of serving hundreds of patients each day.

Najaf is now in the hands of elected government officials. An elected provincial council is at work drafting plans to bring more tourism and commerce to the city. Political life has returned, and campaigns for the upcoming elections have begun, with different parties competing for the vote. The Iraqi police are now responsible for day-to-day security in Najaf. An Iraqi battalion has consumed [assumed] * control of the former American military base, and our forces are now about 40 minutes outside the city.

A U.S. Army sergeant explains our role this way: "We go down there if they call us, and that doesn't happen very often. Usually, we just stay out of their way." Residents of Najaf are also seeing visible progress, and they have no intention of returning to the days of tyranny and terror. One man from Najaf put it this way: "Three years ago, we were in ruins. One year ago, we were fighting in the streets.

* White House correction.

Now look at the people, shopping and eating and not in fear."

There is still plenty of work left to be done in Najaf. Like most of Iraq, the reconstruction in Najaf has proceeded with fits and starts since liberation. It's been uneven. Sustaining electric power remains a major challenge, and construction has begun on three new substations to help boost capacity. Because there is a shortage of clean water, new water treatment and sewage units are now being installed. Security in Najaf has improved substantially, but threats remain. There are still kidnapings, and militias and armed gangs are exerting more influence than they should in a free society. Local leaders and Iraqi security forces are confronting these problems, and we're helping them.

Another area that has seen tremendous gains is the ancient city of Mosul. Mosul is one of Iraq's largest cities, and it's the home of a diverse population of Sunni Arabs, Kurds, and other ethnic groups. Mosul is also the city where our troops brought justice to Saddam's sons in the summer of 2003. In the months after liberation, Mosul was relatively quiet, and so we began to redeploy our forces elsewhere in the country. And when the terrorists and Saddamists infiltrated the city, the Iraqi police were not up to the task of stopping them. These thugs intimidated residents, and they overwhelmed the police.

By late last year, terrorists and Saddamists had gained control of much of Mosul, and they launched a series of car bombings and ambushes, including an attack on a coalition mess tent that killed 14 American servicemembers. The terrorists and Saddamists killed innocent Iraqi civilians, and they left them in the streets with notes pinned to their bodies threatening others. American and Iraqi forces responded with a series of coordinated strikes on the most dangerous parts of the city. Together we killed, captured, and cleared out many of the terrorists and Saddamists, and we helped the Iraqi police and legitimate political leaders regain control of the city. As the Iraqis have grown in strength and ability, they have taken more responsibility for Mosul's security. Coalition forces have moved into a supporting role.

As security in Mosul improved, we began working with local leaders to accelerate reconstruction. Iraqis upgraded key roads and bridges over the Tigris River, rebuilt schools and hospitals, and started refurbishing the Mosul Airport. Police stations and firehouses were rebuilt, and Iraqis have made major improvements in the city's water and sewage network.

Mosul still faces challenges. Like Najaf, Mosul's infrastructure was devastated during Saddam's reign. The city is still not receiving enough electricity, so Iraqis have a major new project underway to expand the Mosul power substation. Terrorist intimidation is still a concern. This past week, people hanging election posters were attacked and killed. Yet freedom is taking hold in Mosul, and residents are making their voices heard. Turnout in the—for the October referendum was over 50 percent in the Province where Mosul is located. That's more than triple the turnout in the January election. And there's heavy campaigning going on in Mosul for next week's election.

In places like Mosul and Najaf, residents are seeing tangible progress in their lives. They're gaining a personal stake in a peaceful future, and their confidence in Iraq's democracy is growing. The progress of these cities is being replicated across much of Iraq, and more of Iraq's people are seeing the real benefits that a democratic society can bring.

Throughout Iraq, we're also seeing challenges common to young democracies. Corruption is a problem at both the national and local levels of the Iraqi government. We will not tolerate fraud, so our Embassy in Baghdad is helping to demand transparency and accountability for the money being invested in reconstruction. We've

helped the Iraqi people establish institutions like a Commission on Public Integrity and a stronger Supreme Board of Audit to improve oversight of the rebuilding process. Listen, the Iraqi people expect money to be spent openly and honestly, and so do the American people.

Another problem is the infiltration of militia groups into some Iraqi security forces, especially the Iraqi police. We're helping Iraqis deal with this problem by embedding coalition transition teams in Iraqi units to mentor police and soldiers. We're also working with Iraq leaders at all levels of government to establish high standards for police recruiting. In a free Iraq, former militia members must shift their loyalty to the National Government and learn to operate under the rule of law.

As we help Iraq's leaders confront these challenges, we're also helping them rebuild a sound economy that will grow and deliver a better life for their people. Iraq is a nation with the potential for tremendous prosperity. The country has a young and educated workforce; they've got abundant land and water; and they have among the largest oil resources in the world. Yet for decades, Saddam Hussein used Iraq's wealth to enrich himself and a privileged few. As he built palaces, Saddam neglected the country's infrastructure. He ruined the economy, and he squandered the most valuable resource in Iraq, the talent and the energy of the Iraqi people.

So we're helping the new Iraq Government reverse decades of economic destruction, reinvigorate its economy, and make responsible reforms. We're helping Iraqis to rebuild their infrastructure and establish the institutions of a market economy. The entrepreneurial spirit is strong in Iraq. Our policies are aimed at unleashing the creativity of the Iraqi people.

Like our approach to training Iraqi security forces, our approach to helping Iraqis rebuild has changed and improved. When we started the reconstruction progress in the spring of 2003, our focus was on repairing and building large-scale infrastructure, such as electrical plants and large water treatment facilities. We moved forward with some of those large projects, yet we found our approach was not meeting the priorities of the Iraqi people. In many places, especially those targeted by the terrorists and Saddamists, the most urgent needs were smaller, localized projects, such as sewer lines and city roads. Delivering visible progress to the Iraqi people required us to focus on projects that could be completed rapidly.

And so in consultation with the Iraqi Government, we started using more resources to fund smaller, local projects that could deliver rapid, noticeable improvements and offer an alternative to the destructive vision of the terrorists. We increased the amount of money our military commanders had at their disposal for flexible use. We worked with Iraqi leaders to provide more contracts directly to Iraqi firms. And by adapting our reconstruction efforts to meet needs on the ground, we're helping Iraqi leaders serve their people, and Iraqis are beginning to see that a free life will be a better life.

Reconstruction has not always gone as well as we had hoped, primarily because of the security challenges on the ground. Rebuilding a nation devastated by a dictator is a large undertaking. It's even harder when terrorists are trying to blow up that which the Iraqis are trying to build. The terrorists and Saddamists have been able to slow progress, but they haven't been able to stop it.

In the space of 2½ years, we have helped Iraqis conduct nearly 3,000 renovation projects at schools, train more than 30,000 teachers, distribute more than 8 million textbooks, rebuild irrigation infrastructure to help more than 400,000 rural Iraqis, and improve drinking water for more than 3 million people.

Our coalition has helped Iraqis introduce a new currency, reopen their stock exchange, extend $21 million in microcredit

and small-business loans to Iraqi entrepreneurs. As a result of these efforts and Iraq's newfound freedom, more than 30,000 new Iraqi businesses have registered since liberation. And according to a recent survey, more than three-quarters of Iraqi businessowners anticipate growth in the national economy over the next 2 years.

This economic development and growth will be really important to addressing the high unemployment rate across parts of that country. Iraq's market-based reforms are gradually returning the proud country to the global economy. Iraqis have negotiated significant debt relief. And for the first time in 25 years, Iraq has completed an economic report card with the International Monetary Fund, a signal to the world financial community that Iraqis are serious about reform and determined to take their rightful place in the world economy.

With all these improvements, we're helping the Iraqi Government deliver meaningful change for the Iraqi people. This is another important blow against the Saddamists and the terrorists. Iraqis who were disillusioned with their situation are beginning to see a hopeful future for their country. Many who once questioned democracy are coming off the fence; they're choosing the side of freedom. This is quiet, steady progress. It doesn't always make the headlines in the evening news. But it's real, and it's important, and it is unmistakable to those who see it close up.

One of those who has seen that progress is Democratic Senator Joe Lieberman. Senator Lieberman has traveled to Iraq 4 times in the past 17 months, and the article he wrote when he returned from his most recent trip provides a clear description of the situation on the ground. Here's what Senator Lieberman wrote about the Iraq he saw: "Progress is visible and practical. There are many more cars on the streets, satellite television dishes on the roofs, and literally millions more cell phones in Iraq hands than before." He describes an Iraqi poll showing that, "two-thirds of Iraqis say they are better off than they were under Saddam Hussein."

Senator Lieberman goes on, "Does America have a good plan for doing this, a strategy for victory in Iraq? Yes, we do. And it's important to make clear to the American people that the plan has not remained stubbornly still, but has changed over the years." The Senator says that mistakes have been made, but he goes on to say that he is worried about a bigger mistake. He writes, "What a colossal mistake it would be for America's bipartisan political leadership to choose this moment in history to lose its will and, in the famous phrase, to seize defeat from the jaws of the coming victory." Senator Lieberman is right.

There is an important debate going on in our Nation's Capital about Iraq, and the fact that we can debate these issues openly in the midst of a dangerous war brings credit to our democracy. In this debate, some are calling for us to withdraw from Iraq on a fixed timetable, without regard to conditions on the ground. Recently, one Democratic leader came out in support of an artificial deadline for withdrawal and said an immediate withdrawal of our troops would "make the American people safer, our military stronger, and bring some stability to the region." That's the wrong policy for our Government. Withdrawing on an artificial deadline would endanger the American people, would harm our military, and make the Middle East less stable. It would give the terrorists exactly what they want.

In a letter to the terrorist leader Zarqawi, the Al Qaida leader Zawahiri has outlined his goals in Iraq with these steps: "Expel the Americans from Iraq; establish an Islamic authority over as much territory as you can, to spread its power in Iraq; extend the jihad wave." The terrorists hope America will withdraw before the job is done, so they can take over the country and turn it into a base for future attacks. Zawahiri

called the Vietnam war as a reason to believe the terrorists can prevail. He wrote, quote, "The aftermath of the collapse of American power in Vietnam and how they ran and left their agents is noteworthy." In the past, Al Qaida has said that American pullouts from Lebanon and Somalia showed them that America was weak and could be made to run. And now the terrorists think they can make America run in Iraq, and that is not going to happen so long as I'm the Commander in Chief.

We are not going to yield the future of Iraq to men like Zarqawi, and we're not going to yield the future of the Middle East to men like bin Laden. We will complete our mission in Iraq and leave behind a democracy that can govern itself, sustain itself, and defend itself. Our military will continue to hunt down the terrorists in Iraq and to prepare the Iraqi security forces to take over more of the fight and control more of the territory on their own. We will continue to help the Iraqis rebuild their cities and their lives so they can enjoy the prosperity that freedom brings. We will continue to stand with the Iraqi people as they move forward on the path of democracy. And when victory is achieved, our troops will then come home with the honor they've earned.

Next week, I'll discuss the political element of our strategy in greater detail, how we're helping Iraqis build a democracy that will be a strong ally in this global war against the terrorists. One of the great lessons of history is that free societies are peaceful societies, and free nations give their citizens a path to resolve their differences peacefully through the democratic process.

Democracy can be difficult and complicated and even chaotic. It can take years of hard work to build a healthy civil society. Iraqis have to overcome many challenges, including longstanding ethnic and religious tensions and the legacy of brutal repression. But they're learning that democracy is the only way to build a just and peaceful society, because it's the only system that gives every citizen a voice in determining its future.

Before our mission in Iraq is accomplished, there will be tough days ahead. Victory in Iraq will require continued sacrifice by our men and women in uniform and the continued determination of our citizens. There will be good days, and there will be bad days in this war. I reject the pessimists in Washington who say, "We can't win this war." Yet every day, we can be confident of the outcome, because we know that freedom has got the power to overcome terror and tyranny. We can be confident about the outcome, because we know the character and strength of the men and women in the fight. Their courage makes all Americans proud.

This generation of Americans in uniform is every bit as brave and determined as the generation that went to war after the attack on our Nation 64 years ago today. Like those who came before, they are defeating a dangerous enemy, bringing freedom to millions, and transforming a troubled part of the world. And like those who came before, they will always have the gratitude of the American people.

Our Nation will uphold the cause for which our men and women in uniform are risking their lives. We will continue to hunt down the terrorists wherever they hide. We will help the Iraqi people so they can build a free society in the heart of a troubled region. And by laying the foundations of freedom in Iraq and across the broader Middle East, we will lay the foundation of peace for generations to come.

Thanks for giving me a chance to come and speak to you today. May God continue to bless our country.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:44 a.m. at the Omni Shoreham Hotel. In his remarks, he referred to Richard N. Haass, president, and Nancy E. Roman, vice president and director, Council on Foreign Relations; former President Saddam Hussein of Iraq; Usama

bin Laden, leader of the Al Qaida terrorist organization; Gov. Asaad Abu Gelal of Najaf Province, Iraq; senior Al Qaida associate Abu Musab Al Zarqawi; and Ayman Al-Zawahiri, founder of the Egyptian Islamic Jihad and senior Al Qaida associate. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of these remarks.

Statement on the Death of Carroll Campbell
December 7, 2005

Laura and I are deeply saddened by the loss of Governor Carroll Campbell. Carroll Campbell was a strong leader, a committed public servant, and a good friend. For more than two decades, he represented the people of South Carolina as a State legislator, Member of Congress, and Governor. He was a tireless advocate for the State he loved and was known for his integrity and character. We join South Carolinians and Americans around the Nation in mourning the passing of Carroll Campbell, and we send our thoughts and prayers to Iris and the entire Campbell family.

Letter to Congressional Leaders Transmitting a Consolidated Report on the Deployment of United States Combat-Equipped Armed Forces
December 7, 2005

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

I am providing this supplemental consolidated report, prepared by my Administration and consistent with the War Powers Resolution (Public Law 93–148), as part of my efforts to keep the Congress informed about deployments of U.S. combat-equipped armed forces around the world. This supplemental report covers operations in support of the war on terror, Kosovo, and Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The War on Terror

Since September 24, 2001, I have reported, consistent with Public Law 107–40 and the War Powers Resolution, on the combat operations in Afghanistan against al-Qaida terrorists and their Taliban supporters, which began on October 7, 2001, and the deployment of various combat-equipped and combat-support forces to a number of locations in the Central, Pacific, and Southern Command areas of operation in support of those operations and of other operations in our war on terror.

I will direct additional measures as necessary in the exercise of the right of the United States to self-defense and to protect U.S. citizens and interests. Such measures may include short-notice deployments of special operations and other forces for sensitive operations in various locations throughout the world. It is not possible to know at this time either the precise scope or duration of the deployment of U.S. Armed Forces necessary to counter the terrorist threat to the United States.

United States Armed Forces, with the assistance of numerous coalition partners, continue to conduct the U.S. campaign to pursue al-Qaida terrorists and to eliminate support to al-Qaida. These operations have been successful in seriously degrading al-Qaida's training capabilities. United States Armed Forces, with the assistance of numerous coalition partners, ended the

Taliban regime and are actively pursuing and engaging remnant al-Qaida and Taliban fighters in Afghanistan. Approximately 280 U.S. personnel are also assigned to the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) in Afghanistan. The U.N. Security Council authorized the ISAF in U.N. Security Council Resolution 1386 of December 20, 2001, and has reaffirmed its authorization since that time, most recently, for a 12-month period from October 13, 2005, in U.N. Security Council Resolution 1623 of September 13, 2005. The mission of the ISAF under NATO command is to assist the Government of Afghanistan in creating a safe and secure environment that allows reconstruction and the reestablishment of Afghan authorities. Currently, all 26 NATO nations contribute to the ISAF. Ten non-NATO contributing countries also participate by providing military and other support personnel to the ISAF.

The United States continues to detain several hundred al-Qaida and Taliban fighters who are believed to pose a continuing threat to the United States and its interests. The combat-equipped and combat-support forces deployed to Naval Base, Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, in the U.S. Southern Command area of operations since January 2002 continue to conduct secure detention operations for the approximately 500 enemy combatants at Guantanamo Bay.

The U.N. Security Council authorized a Multinational Force (MNF) in Iraq under unified command in U.N. Security Council Resolution 1511 of October 16, 2003, and reaffirmed its authorization in U.N. Security Council Resolution 1546 of June 8, 2004. In U.N. Security Council Resolution 1637 of November 8, 2005, the Security Council, noting the Iraqi Government's request to retain the presence of the MNF, extended the MNF mandate for a period ending on December 31, 2006. Under Resolutions 1546 and 1637, the mission of the MNF is to contribute to security and stability in Iraq, as reconstruction continues, until the completion of Iraq's political transformation. These contributions have included assisting in building the capability of the Iraqi security forces and institutions, as the Iraqi people, represented by the Transitional National Assembly, drafted and approved a constitution and progressed toward the establishment of a constitutionally elected government. The U.S. contribution to the MNF is approximately 160,000 military personnel.

In furtherance of our efforts against terrorists who pose a continuing and imminent threat to the United States, our friends and allies, and our forces abroad, the United States continues to work with friends and allies in areas around the globe. United States combat-equipped and combat-support forces are located in the Horn of Africa region, and the U.S. forces headquarters element in Djibouti provides command and control support as necessary for military operations against al-Qaida and other international terrorists in the Horn of Africa region, including Yemen. These forces also assist in enhancing counter terrorism capabilities in Kenya, Ethiopia, Yemen, and Djibouti. In addition, the United States continues to conduct maritime interception operations on the high seas in the areas of responsibility of all of the geographic combatant commanders. These maritime operations have the responsibility to stop the movement, arming, or financing of international terrorists.

Nato-led Kosovo Force (KFOR)

As noted in previous reports regarding U.S. contributions in support of peacekeeping efforts in Kosovo, 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 an international security presence in order to deter renewed hostilities; verify and, if necessary, enforce the terms of the Military Technical Agreement between NATO and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (which is now Serbia and Montenegro); enforce the terms of the

Undertaking on Demilitarization and Transformation of the former Kosovo Liberation Army; 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, there are 25 NATO nations contributing to KFOR. Eleven non-NATO contributing countries also participate by providing military personnel and other support personnel to KFOR. The U.S. contribution to KFOR in Kosovo is about 1,700 U.S. military personnel, or approximately 10 percent of KFOR's total strength of approximately 17,000 personnel. Additionally, U.S. military personnel occasionally operate from Macedonia, Albania, and Greece in support of KFOR operations.

The U.S. forces have been assigned to a sector principally centered around Gnjilane in the eastern region of Kosovo. For U.S. KFOR forces, as for KFOR generally, maintaining a safe and secure environment remains the primary military task. The KFOR operates under NATO command and control and rules of engagement. The KFOR coordinates with and supports the UNMIK at most levels; provides a security presence in towns, villages, and the countryside; and organizes checkpoints and patrols in key areas to provide security, protect minorities, resolve disputes, and help instill in the community a feeling of confidence.

In accordance with U.N. Security Council Resolution 1244, UNMIK continues to transfer additional competencies to the Kosovar Provisional Institutions of Self-Government, which includes the President, Prime Minister, multiple ministries, and the Kosovo Assembly. The UNMIK retains ultimate authority in some sensitive areas such as police, justice, and ethnic minority affairs.

NATO continues formally to review KFOR's mission at 6-month intervals. These reviews provide a basis for assessing current force levels, future requirements, force structure, force reductions, and the eventual withdrawal of KFOR. NATO has adopted the Joint Operations Area plan to regionalize and rationalize its force structure in the Balkans. The UNMIK international police and the Kosovo Police Service (KPS) have full responsibility for public safety and policing throughout Kosovo except in the area of South Mitrovica, where KFOR and UNMIK share this responsibility due to security concerns. The UNMIK international police and KPS also have begun to assume responsibility for guarding patrimonial sites and established border-crossing checkpoints. The KFOR augments security in particularly sensitive areas or in response to particular threats as needed.

NATO Headquarters in Bosnia and Herzegovina

Pursuant to the June 2004 decision made by NATO Heads of State and Government, and in accordance with U.N. Security Council Resolution 1575 of November 22, 2004, NATO concluded its Stabilization Force operations in Bosnia-Herzegovina and established NATO Headquarters-Sarajevo to continue to assist in implementing the Peace Agreement in conjunction with a newly established European Force. The NATO Headquarters-Sarajevo, to which approximately 220 U.S. personnel are assigned, is, with the European Force, the legal successor to SFOR. The principal tasks of NATO Headquarters-Sarajevo are providing advice on defense reform and performing operational supporting tasks, such as counterterrorism and supporting the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia.

I have directed the participation of U.S. Armed Forces in all of these operations pursuant to my constitutional authority to conduct U.S. foreign relations and as Commander in Chief and Chief Executive. Officials of my Administration and I communicate regularly with the leadership and other Members of Congress with regard to

these deployments, and we will continue to do so.

Sincerely,

GEORGE W. BUSH

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to J. Dennis Hastert, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Ted Stevens, President pro tempore of the Senate. This letter was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on December 9.

Remarks at a Reception for Senatorial Candidate Mark Kennedy in Minneapolis, Minnesota
December 9, 2005

Thanks for coming. Thank you all. I appreciate the warm reception. [*Laughter*] This is a Senator Kennedy I can work with. [*Laughter*] I have come because I know Mark, and I know he is going to make a great United States Senator for the people of Minnesota.

He's a down-to-earth fellow. After all, he was raised in rural Minnesota. He brings commonsense values to Washington, DC. He's not one of these kind of fancy guys; he's a guy that gets the job done. He focuses on results. He works on behalf of the people. He'll make a great United States Senator from Minnesota.

Laura sends her love. Mark and I both married above ourselves. [*Laughter*] I'm proud to be up here with Debbie Kennedy as well. I met the—Sarah—the Kennedy family, if you don't know it, is quite large. [*Laughter*] If they all vote—[*laughter*]—it's a landslide. [*Laughter*] But Laura sends her very best.

One of the important things about running for office is to have a family that stands with you. It can be a little lonely out there at times. But there's nothing better than coming home to a great wife, and in Mark's case, and a family that dearly loves him. One reason to send Mark Kennedy to the United States Senate is, he understands the importance of family in our society today.

I want to thank the Governor of your great State, Tim Pawlenty, for being here. He's a fine man and doing a great job as Governor. I want to thank the Lieutenant Governor who is here. I want to thank all the State and local officials.

I want to thank my friend Norm Coleman. Congressman Jim Ramstad is with us today. Jim, I appreciate you coming—newlywed, I might add. Mark and I flew over with Congressman John Kline—you talk about a patriot and a good man who needs to be reelected to the United States Congress.

I want to thank a longtime family friend of ours, Rudy Boschwitz, for his great leadership. I appreciate the Boschwitz family for being here—all the Boschwitz boys. [*Laughter*] And they didn't ask for any advice, but I gave it, and I said, "Listen to your mother." [*Laughter*] Mark, you need to be listening to yours too. [*Laughter*]

I want to thank all the grassroots activists. Thank you all for coming. Here's the deal. It's important to contribute like you have. But your contributions are going to be needed to win this campaign, and these are contributions of talking to your neighbors, going to your community centers and houses of worship and places you work, and telling people that when you've got somebody who's honest and decent like Mark Kennedy, they need to send him to the United States Senate for the good of all people of Minnesota.

So I want to thank you for what you have done for this good man and what

you're going to do. I know he's going to work hard. He was just telling me today how many parades he's marched in. [*Laughter*] That's a lot, by the way. [*Laughter*] Showed me that old football schedules that he passes out. [*Laughter*] He's a grassroots-type fellow, gets down to where the people are. He tells them what's on his mind, and when he says something, he does it. And that's the kind of people we need in Washington, DC.

I also look forward to working with Mark. We're facing—we're living in historic times. These are dangerous times, and they're times of great opportunity. And I'm looking forward to working with Senator Mark Kennedy to secure this country, to do our duty in Washington, DC, and do everything we can to protect the people.

Our lives and the life of our Nation changed on September the 11th, 2001, and we must never forget the lessons of that day. We must deal with threats before they fully materialize. There's an enemy—[*applause*]. We have got to see the world the way it is, not the way we'd like it to be. There is an enemy which hates America. They hate us because we stand for what they don't believe in. We believe in freedom. We believe in the freedom for people to worship any way they want in the United States of America. We believe that people can speak their mind freely. We believe that people can write their editorials the way they want to write them. We believe in freedom, and we're not going to change.

And we face an enemy that has got an ideology and a strategy and a tactical plan to achieve their strategy. These people have hijacked a great religion and turned it to their advantage—they think. They're trying to spread a totalitarian empire from Indonesia to Spain. How do I know? Because they've told us. They've told us pointblank what they're looking for. They're trying to drive the United States out of the Middle East so they can take over other countries to spread their dark view of the world. They want safe haven from which to launch attacks.

Think about Afghanistan. They had achieved their objective for a short period of time. They had taken over Afghanistan so they could plot and plan their attacks, one of which was the September the 11th attack. I told the world—and I meant it—"If you harbor a terrorist, you're equally as guilty as the terrorist." Our troops liberated the people of Afghanistan and routed the Taliban. And that part of the world is better off, and our country is more secure because democracy has taken hold in Afghanistan.

The enemy has made it abundantly clear that Iraq is a central front in their war against humanity. That's what they've said. And our Nation must understand that Iraq is the central front in the war against the terrorists. And that's why we have—we're there for one reason, and that is to achieve a victory, to make America more secure.

We took the threat seriously, and we removed that threat. And now our strategy is twofold. On the one hand, we're helping the brave Iraqis establish a democracy. Any way you look at it, these people that lived under the brutal thumb of a tyrant have made incredible progress. They had January elections. They approved a Constitution. And next week, they're voting for a 4-year Government. Democracy is making progress because of the courage of the Iraqi people.

And the second prong of our strategy is to train Iraqis so they can take the fight to the enemy, so they can bring people to justice. And we're making progress there as well. Of course, it's been uneven at times. But it's important for you to know that the Iraqis want to secure their democracy, and democracy helps make this world more peaceful.

Now, there's a debate raging in Washington, DC. There are some who are arguing for a fixed timetable of withdrawal. I think it's the wrong policy, and so does

Mark Kennedy. A fixed timetable of withdrawal would embolden the enemy, would confuse the Iraqis, and would send the wrong signal to our young men and women in uniform. The United States of America—[*applause*].

We have got a strategy for victory, and we'll see that strategy through. We will defeat the terrorists in Iraq. We will not let Al Qaida take a stronghold—get a stronghold in Iraq. We'll help this country develop a democracy, which will send a powerful signal to people in Damascus and Tehran.

Our short-term objective is to stay on the hunt and bring the killers to justice before they hurt us again. I'd rather be defeating them there than facing them here at home. And our long-term objective is to spread the power of democracy and freedom.

You know, I recently went to the Far East, as you may know, and visited with my friend Prime Minister Koizumi of Japan. He's a good fellow, and he's a good friend. It struck me then, like it has in previous times, about how ironic it is, in a way, that the son of an 18-year-old Navy fighter pilot who fought the Japanese is now talking peace with the leader of a country that was our sworn enemy. Think about that for a minute. Sixty years ago, a lot of folks, a lot of your relatives, signed up to fight an enemy that attacked us. By the way, we lost more people on September the 11th than we did when Pearl Harbor was bombed. And a lot of people went and fought, and there was a lot of death and destruction. And yet, 60 years later—which seems like a long time when you're 59—[*laughter*]—but it's really not all that long in the march of history—I'm talking with Prime Minister Koizumi about how to keep the peace. So something happened between the time that my dad and your relatives signed up in World War II, and I'm talking peace with Koizumi. And what happened was, Japan became a democracy.

These are historic times. We have an obligation and a duty to protect the American people. And we'll do just that. That's why Mark Kennedy needs to be in the United States Senate. And we have an opportunity—and we have an historic opportunity to lay the foundation of peace for generations to come. I'm absolutely convinced that someday, 50 or 60 years from now, an American President will be speaking to an audience saying, "Thank goodness a generation of Americans rose to the challenge and helped people be liberated from tyranny. Democracy spread, and the world is more peaceful for it."

And there's no doubt in my mind Mark Kennedy understands the stakes and shares the vision for laying that foundation for peace. He needs to be a United States Senator from the State of Minnesota.

I've enjoyed working with Mark Kennedy on economic matters. We share a philosophy that says this: The role of government is not to create wealth; the role of government is to create an environment in which the entrepreneurial spirit is strong in America.

We've been through some tough times in this country. As you might recall, we had a recession, some corporate scandals, an attack on our country, a war, major hurricanes. And yet the third quarter growth in 2005 was 4.3 percent. We've added 4.5 million jobs since May of 2003. The unemployment rate in Minnesota is 3.7 percent. The unemployment rate nationally is 5 percent. Homeownership is at an alltime high. More minorities own a home than ever before in our Nation's history. This economy is strong, and it's going to be stronger.

And one reason it's strong is we cut the taxes on the people. We understand that when somebody has got more money to spend or save, this economy is going to grow. And Mark Kennedy understands that. He also understands that we must have certainty in the Tax Code. We need to make the tax cuts we passed permanent. By the way, when you hear somebody say, "Don't

make the tax cuts permanent," that's Washington, DC, code for saying, "We're going to raise your taxes." [*Laughter*] That's what that is.

And the other thing we've done is, we've worked hard to make sure that we've been wise about how we spend your money. Each year we've cut the rate of growth of nonsecurity discretionary spending. I'm hoping to sign a series of appropriation bills that will actually have negative growth in nondiscretionary—in nonsecurity discretionary spending, the first time since Ronald Reagan was the President. Mark Kennedy is a fiscal conservative. He is a CPA. It seems like to me we got enough lawyers in the United States Senate; why shouldn't we have a CPA in the United States Senate?

I want to talk about a couple of more issues. We got a farm bill coming up. This is an important farm State. It seems like to me you want to have a United States Senator who can come in the Oval Office and talk to the President about Minnesota farmers. We passed a good farm bill. I want to thank Mark for working on it. And in that farm bill was not only a safety net for our farmers but a commitment to open up markets for Minnesota farmers. Here's what I think. I think if you're good at something, like the Minnesota farmers are, they ought to be given opportunity to sell product all across the world.

In the farm bill, there was a strong conservation title called the CRP program. It's good for Minnesota ranchers and farmers. If you're interested in a strong ag economy like we got today, if you're a Minnesota farmer, there's only one man suited to be the United States Senator in this race, and that's Mark Kennedy.

Health care is an issue. It's an issue for patients. It's an issue for docs. It's an issue for small-business owners. We intend to do something about it. There's a philosophical divide, however, and there will be one in this race. There are some who believe that the Government ought to be making all the decisions. And there's people like Mark and I who believe that the best decision-making in health care is between the patient and the doctor. And that's why we strongly support health savings accounts, associated health plans for small businesses, community health centers, a reformed Medicare program.

But I want to talk about one other issue in health care. You cannot have affordable and available health care if your doctors are getting sued all the time. We got a problem in this country. We got too many docs being run out of the practice of medicine because of these junk lawsuits. And you're paying for it twice. You're paying for it as a result of higher doctor bills when you go to the office, and you're paying for it through higher—because the Federal Government has got a huge, huge share of health care spending.

See, when I first went to Washington, I said, "Well, this is a local issue. The Governors can take care of it." But then I realized all these frivolous lawsuits and the defensive practice of medicine and the increase of premiums for docs are costing us billions of dollars a year at the Federal level—through Medicaid, Medicare, and veterans spending, for example. So medical liability is a national problem that requires a national solution. And I look forward to working with United States Senator Mark Kennedy to make sure health care is available and affordable for Minnesota patients.

There are three branches of Government, as you know. Well, some of them back there think there's four branches. [*Laughter*] The Constitution recognizes three branches. [*Laughter*] I'm proudly part of the executive branch. You'll be proudly part of the—he is a part of the legislative branch. And we've got to make sure that the judiciary—judicial branch of Government functions the way the framers of our Constitution wanted it to function, and that is to have people who serve on our bench who are not going to try to legislate but

who will strictly interpret the Constitution of the United States of America.

I look forward to working with the United States Senator Mark Kennedy, who will make sure that the judges I name, those strict constructionists, those who will not try to legislate from the bench, are given an up-or-down vote on the floor of the United States Senate and confirmed—judges like John Roberts and Judge Sam Alito.

So I've come to thank you for supporting a good man. I've come to lay out my opinion, and that is, he's the right person for the job. He thinks right. He acts right. He's not one of these kind of politicians that takes a poll and then tries to figure out what to believe. We got too many of those in Washington, DC. We need straight shooters, people of principle, and people who care deeply about the State of Minnesota. And that person is Mark Kennedy.

Thanks for coming, and God bless.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:34 p.m. at the Hilton Minneapolis Hotel. In his remarks, he referred to senatorial candidate Kennedy's wife, Debbie, and his daughter, Sarah; Gov. Timothy Pawlenty and Lt. Gov. Carol Molnau of Minnesota; Rudy Boschwitz, head of the U.S. delegation to the United Nations Commission on Human Rights; and former President Saddam Hussein of Iraq.

The President's Radio Address
December 10, 2005

Good morning. This week, members of a House and Senate conference committee reached an agreement on reauthorization of the PATRIOT Act. Since its passage after the attacks of September the 11th, 2001, the PATRIOT Act has proved essential to fighting the war on terror and preventing our enemies from striking America again.

This week's agreement would renew all 16 provisions of the PATRIOT Act that are scheduled to expire at the end of this month, and it would make 14 of these provisions permanent. It reauthorizes critical national security tools while bolstering the PATRIOT Act's significant protections of civil liberties. It also includes provisions to fight crime and terrorism at America's seaports and tougher criminal penalties and increased resources to combat the dangerous spread of methamphetamine abuse throughout our country.

I applaud the conference committee for its good work. Now Congress needs to finish the job. Both the Senate and the House need to hold a prompt vote and send me a bill renewing the PATRIOT Act so I can sign it into law.

Over the past 4 years, the PATRIOT Act has been a strong weapon for going after the terrorists. America's law enforcement and intelligence personnel have put the PATRIOT Act to wise and effective use while protecting our civil liberties. They have used the law to prosecute terrorist operatives and supporters or break up terror cells in New York, Oregon, Virginia, California, Texas, and Ohio. The PATRIOT Act has accomplished exactly what it was designed to do—it has protected American liberty and saved American lives.

By renewing the PATRIOT Act, we will ensure that our law enforcement and intelligence officers have the tools they need to protect our citizens. The PATRIOT Act tore down the legal and bureaucratic wall that kept law enforcement and intelligence authorities from sharing vital information

about terrorist threats. Now law enforcement and intelligence officers are working together.

The PATRIOT Act also allowed Federal investigators to pursue terrorists with the same tools they already use against other criminals. For example, before the PATRIOT Act, it was easier to track the phone calls of a drug dealer than the phone calls of a terrorist. Before the PATRIOT Act, it was easier to get the credit card receipts of a tax cheat than those of an Al Qaida bankroller. The PATRIOT Act ended these double standards. The theory is straightforward: If we have good tools to fight street crime and fraud, then law enforcement should have at least the same tools to fight terrorism.

The PATRIOT Act is helping America defeat our enemies while safeguarding civil liberties for all our people. The judicial branch has a strong oversight role in the application of the PATRIOT Act. Under the act, law enforcement officers need a Federal judge's permission to wiretap a foreign terrorist's phone or search his property. Congress also oversees our use of the PATRIOT Act. Attorney General Gonzales delivers regular reports on the PATRIOT Act to the House and the Senate.

The valuable protections of the PATRIOT Act will expire at the end of this month if Congress fails to act, but the terrorist threats will not expire on that schedule. In the war on terror, we cannot afford to be without this vital law for a single moment. So, I urge Congress to approve the conference committee agreement promptly and reauthorize the PATRIOT Act.

Thank you for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 7:32 a.m. on December 9 in the Cabinet Room at the White House for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on December 10. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on December 9 but was embargoed for release until the broadcast. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of this address.

Remarks to the World Affairs Council of Philadelphia and a Question-and-Answer Session in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

December 12, 2005

Thanks for the warm welcome. Thank you for the chance to come and speak to the Philadelphia World Affairs Council. This is an important organization that has, since 1949, has provided a forum for debate and discussion on important issues. I've come to discuss an issue that's really important, and that is victory in the war on terror.

And that war started on September the 11th, 2001, when our Nation awoke to a sudden attack. Like generations before us, we have accepted new responsibilities. We're confronting dangers with new resolve. We're taking the fight to those who attacked us and to those who share their murderous vision for future attacks. We will fight this war without wavering, and we'll prevail.

The war on terror will take many turns, and the enemy must be defeated on many—on every battlefield, from the streets of Western cities to the mountains of Afghanistan, to the tribal regions of Pakistan, to the islands of Southeast Asia, and to the Horn of Africa. Yet the terrorists have made it clear that Iraq is the central front in their war against humanity, so we must recognize Iraq is the central front in the war on terror.

Last month, my administration released a document called the "National Strategy for Victory in Iraq." And in recent weeks, I've been discussing our strategy with the American people. At the U.S. Naval Academy, I spoke about our efforts to defeat the terrorists and train Iraqi security forces so they can provide safety for their own citizens. Last week before the Council on Foreign Relations, I explained how we are working with Iraqi forces and Iraqi leaders to help Iraqis improve security and restore order, to rebuild cities taken from the enemy, and to help the National Government revitalize Iraq's infrastructure and economy.

Today I'm going to speak in depth about another vital element of our strategy: our efforts to help the Iraqi people build a lasting democracy in the heart of the Middle East. I can think of no better place to discuss the rise of a free Iraq than in the heart of Philadelphia, the city where America's democracy was born.

I want to thank the—Buntzie Churchill and Bill Sasso for letting me come. Thank you all for welcoming me. I got something to say—I'm looking forward to saying it here. I'm traveling with United States Senators; they're always quick to hop a ride on Air Force One—[*laughter*]—particularly when they don't have to reimburse the Government. [*Laughter*] But I'm proud to be a friend of Arlen Specter and Rick Santorum. They're fine, honorable Members of the United States Senate. Also pleased that Jim Gerlach and Mike Fitzpatrick and Joe Pitts of the United States Congress are with us. Thanks for serving; thanks for being here.

A few blocks from here stands Independence Hall, where our Declaration of Independence was signed and our Constitution was debated. From the perspective of more than two centuries, the success of America's democratic experiment seems almost inevitable. At the time, however, that success didn't seem so obvious or assured.

The 8 years from the end of the Revolutionary War to the election of a constitutional government were a time of disorder and upheaval. There were uprisings, with mobs attacking courthouses and government buildings. There was a planned military coup that was defused only by the personal intervention of George Washington. In 1783, Congress was chased from this city by angry veterans demanding backpay, and they stayed on the run for 6 months. There were tensions between the mercantile North and the agricultural South that threatened to break apart our young Republic. And there were British loyalists who were opposed to independence and had to be reconciled with America's new democracy.

Our Founders faced many difficult challenges. They made mistakes. They learned from their experiences, and they adjusted their approach. Our Nation's first effort at governing—a governing charter, the Articles of Confederation, failed. It took years of debate and compromise before we ratified our Constitution and inaugurated our first President. It took a 4-year civil war and a century of struggle after that before the promise of our Declaration was extended to all Americans.

It is important to keep this history in mind as we look at the progress of freedom and democracy in Iraq. No nation in history has made the transition to a free society without facing challenges, setbacks, and false starts. The past 2½ years have been a period of difficult struggle in Iraq, yet they've also been a time of great hope and achievement for the Iraqi people.

Just over 2½ years ago, Iraq was in the grip of a cruel dictator who had invaded his neighbors, sponsored terrorists, pursued and used weapons of mass destruction, murdered his own people, and for more than a decade, defied the demands of the United Nations and the civilized world. Since then, the Iraqi people have assumed sovereignty over their country, held free

elections, drafted a democratic Constitution, and approved that Constitution in a nationwide referendum. Three days from now, they go to polls for the third time this year and choose a new Government under the new Constitution.

It's a remarkable transformation for a country that has virtually no experience with democracy and which is struggling to overcome the legacy of one of the worst tyrannies the world has known. And Iraqis achieved all this while determined enemies use violence and destruction to stop the progress. There's still a lot of difficult work to be done in Iraq, but thanks to the courage of the Iraqi people, the year 2005 will be recorded as a turning point in the history of Iraq, the history of the Middle East, and the history of freedom.

As the Iraqi people struggle to build their democracy, adversaries continue their war on a free Iraq. The enemy in Iraq is a combination of rejectionists and Saddamists and terrorists. The rejectionists are ordinary Iraqis, mostly Sunni Arabs, who miss the privileged status they had under the regime of Saddam Hussein. They reject an Iraq in which they're no longer the dominant group. We believe that over time, most of this group will be persuaded to support a democratic Iraq led by a Federal Government that is strong enough to protect minority rights, and we're encouraged that many Sunnis plan to actively participate in this week's election.

The Saddamists are former regime loyalists who harbor dreams of returning to power, and they're trying to foment anti-democratic sentiment amongst the larger Sunni community. Yet they lack popular support, and over time, they can be marginalized and defeated by the people and security forces of a free Iraq.

The terrorists affiliated with or inspired by Al Qaida are the smallest but most lethal group. Many are foreigners coming to fight freedom's progress in Iraq. They are led by a brutal terrorist named Zarqawi, Al Qaida's chief of operations in Iraq, who has stated his allegiance to Usama bin Laden. The terrorists' stated objective is to drive U.S. and coalition forces out of Iraq and gain control of that country and then use Iraq as a base from which to launch attacks against America, overthrow moderate governments in the Middle East, and establish a totalitarian Islamic empire that reaches from Spain to Indonesia.

The terrorists in Iraq share the ideology of the terrorists who struck the United States on September the 11th. They share the ideology with those who blew up commuters in London and Madrid, murdered tourists in Bali, and killed workers in Riyadh and slaughtered guests at a wedding in Amman, Jordan. This is an enemy without conscience, and they cannot be appeased. If we were not fighting and destroying this enemy in Iraq, they would not be leading quiet lives as good citizens. They would be plotting and killing our citizens across the world and here at home. By fighting the terrorists in Iraq, we are confronting a direct threat to the American people, and we will accept nothing less than complete victory.

We are pursuing a comprehensive strategy in Iraq. Our goal is victory, and victory will be achieved when the terrorists and Saddamists can no longer threaten Iraq's democracy, when the Iraqi security forces can provide for the safety of their own citizens, and when Iraq is not a safe haven for terrorists to plot new attacks against our Nation.

Our strategy in Iraq has three elements: On the economic side, we're helping the Iraqis restore their infrastructure, reform their economy, and build the prosperity that will give all Iraqis a stake in a free and peaceful Iraq. On the security side, coalition and Iraqi forces are on the offense against the enemy. We're working together to clear out areas controlled by the terrorists and Saddam loyalists and leaving Iraqi forces to hold territory taken from the enemy. And as we help Iraqis fight these enemies, we are working to build capable

and effective Iraqi security forces so they can take the lead in the fight and eventually take responsibility for the safety and security of their citizens without major foreign assistance.

We're making steady progress. The Iraqi forces are becoming more and more capable. They're taking more responsibility for more and more territory. We're transferring bases to their control so they can take the fight to the enemy. And that means American and coalition forces can concentrate on training Iraqis and hunting down the high-value targets like the terrorist Zarqawi and his associates.

Today I want to discuss the political element of our strategy, our efforts to help the Iraqis build inclusive democratic institutions that will protect the interests of all the Iraqi people. By helping Iraqis to build a democracy, we will win over those who doubted they had a place in a new Iraq and undermine the terrorists and Saddamists. By helping Iraqis to build a democracy, we will gain an ally in the war on terror. By helping Iraqis build a democracy, we will inspire reformers across the Middle East. And by helping Iraqis build a democracy, we will bring hope to a troubled region, and this will make the American people more secure.

From the outset, the political element of our strategy in Iraq has been guided by a clear principle: Democracy takes different forms in different cultures. Yet, in all cultures, successful free societies are built on certain common foundations: rule of law, freedom of speech, freedom of assembly, a free economy, and freedom to worship. Respect for the belief of others is the only way to build a society where compassion and tolerance prevail. Societies that lay these foundations not only survive but thrive. Societies that do not lay these foundations risk backsliding into tyranny.

When our coalition arrived in Iraq, we found a nation where almost none of these basic foundations existed. Decades of brutal rule by Saddam Hussein had destroyed the fabric of Iraqi civil society. Under Saddam, Iraq was a country where dissent was crushed. A centralized economy enriched a dictator instead of the people. Secret courts meted out repression instead of justice. And Shi'a Muslims and Kurds and other groups were brutally oppressed. And when Saddam Hussein's regime fled Baghdad, they left behind a country with few civic institutions in place to hold Iraq society together.

To fill the vacuum after liberation, we established the Coalition Provisional Authority. The CPA was ably led by Ambassador Jerry Bremer, and many fine officials from our Government volunteered to serve in the EPA—CPA. While things did not always go as planned, these men and women did a good job under extremely difficult and dangerous circumstances, helping to restore basic services, making sure food was distributed, and reestablishing Government ministries.

One of the CPA's most important tasks was bringing the Iraqi people into the decisionmaking process of their Government after decades of tyrannical rule. Three months after liberation, our coalition worked with the United Nations and Iraqi leaders to establish an Iraqi Governing Council. The Governing Council gave Iraqis a voice in their own affairs, but it was unelected. It was subordinate to the CPA, and therefore did not satisfy the hunger of Iraqis for self-government. Like free people everywhere, Iraqis wanted to be governed by leaders they had elected, not foreign officials.

So in the summer of 2003, we proposed a plan to transfer sovereignty to the Iraqi people. Under this plan, the CPA would continue to govern Iraq while appointed Iraqi leaders drafted a constitution, put that constitution before the people, and then held elections to choose a new Government. Only when that elected Government took office would the Iraqis regain their sovereignty.

This plan met with the disapproval of the Iraqis. They made it clear that they wanted a constitution that was written by elected leaders of a free Iraq, and they wanted sovereignty placed in Iraqi hands sooner. We listened, and we adjusted our approach. In November of 2003, we negotiated a new plan with the Governing Council, with steps for an accelerated transition to Iraqi self-government. Under this new plan, a Transitional Administrative Law was written by the Governing Council and adopted in March of 2004. This law guaranteed personal freedoms unprecedented in the Arab world and set forth four major milestones to guide Iraq's transition to a constitutional democracy.

The first milestone was the transfer of sovereignty to an Iraqi Interim Government by the end of June 2004. The second was for Iraqis to hold free elections to choose a Transitional Government by January of 2005. The third was for Iraqis to adopt a democratic constitution, which would be drafted no later than August 2005 and put before the Iraqi people in a nationwide referendum no later than October. And the fourth was for Iraqis to choose a Government under that democratic constitution, with elections held December of 2005.

The first milestone was met when our coalition handed over sovereignty to the Iraqi leaders on June 28th, 2004, 2 days ahead of schedule. In January 2005, Iraqis met the second milestone when they went to the polls and chose their leaders in free elections. Almost 8½ million Iraqis defied the car bombers and assassins to cast their ballots, and the world watched in awe as jubilant Iraqis danced in the street and held ink-stained fingers and celebrated their freedom.

The January elections were a watershed event for Iraq and the Middle East, yet they were not without flaws. One problem was the failure of the vast majority of Sunni Arabs to vote. When Sunnis saw a new 275-member Parliament taking power in which they had only 16 seats, many realized that their failure to participate in the democrat process had hurt their chances and hurt their groups—it hurt their constituencies. And Shi'a and Kurdish leaders who had won power at the polls saw that for a free and unified Iraq to succeed, they needed Sunni Arabs to be part of the Government. We encouraged Iraq's leaders to reach out to Sunni leaders and bring them into the governing process. When the Transitional Government was seated in the spring of this year, Sunni Arabs filled important posts, including a Vice President, a Minister of Defense, and the Speaker of the National Assembly.

The new Government's main political challenge—next political challenge was to meet the third milestone, which was adopting a democratic constitution. Again, Iraq's leaders reached out to Sunni Arabs who had boycotted the elections and included them in the drafting process. Fifteen Sunni Arab negotiators and several Sunni Arab advisers joined the work of the constitutional drafting committee. After much tough debate, representatives of Iraq's diverse communities drafted a bold Constitution that guarantees the rule of law, freedom of assembly, property rights, freedom of speech and the press, women's rights, and the right to vote. As one Arab scholar put it, the Iraqi Constitution marks "the dawn of a new age in Arab life."

The document that initially emerged from the committee did not unify Iraqis, and many Sunnis on the constitutional committee did not support the draft. Yet Iraq's leaders continued working to gain Sunni support. And thanks to last-minute changes—including a new procedure for considering amendments to the Constitution next year—a deal was struck 4 days before the Iraqis went to the polls. The revised Constitution was endorsed by Iraq's largest Sunni party. It was approved in referendum that attracted over a million more voters than in the January elections. Many Sunnis voted against the Constitution, but Sunnis voted in large numbers for the first

time. They joined the political process, and by doing so, they reject the violence of the Saddamists and rejectionists. Through hard work and compromise, Iraqis adopted the most progressive democratic Constitution in the Arab world.

On Thursday, Iraqis will meet their fourth milestone. And when they do go to the polls and choose a new Government under the new Constitution, it will be a remarkable event in the Arab world. Despite terrorist violence, the country is buzzing with signs and sounds of democracy in action. The streets of Baghdad and Najaf and Mosul and other cities are full of signs and posters. The television and radio airwaves are thick with political ads and commentary. Hundreds of parties and coalitions have registered for this week's elections, and they're campaigning vigorously. Candidates are holding rallies and laying out their agendas and asking for the vote.

Our troops see this young democracy up close. First Lieutenant Frank Shriley of Rock Hall, Maryland, says, "It's a cool thing riding around Baghdad and seeing the posters. It reminds me of being home during election time. After so many years of being told what to do, having a real vote is different."

Unlike the January elections, many Sunnis are campaigning vigorously for office this time around. Many Sunni parties that opposed the Constitution have registered to compete in this week's vote. Two major Sunni coalitions have formed, and other Sunni leaders have joined national coalitions that cross religious, ethnic, and sectarian boundaries. As one Sunni politician put it, this election "is a vote for Iraq. We want a national Iraq, not a sectarian one."

To encourage broader participation by all Iraqi communities, the National Assembly made important changes in Iraq's electoral laws that will increase Sunni representation in the new assembly. In the January elections, Iraq was one giant electoral district, so seats in the transitional assembly simply reflected turnout. Because few Sunnis voted, their communities were left with little representation. Now Iraq has a new electoral system, where seats in the new Council of Representatives will be allocated by Province and population—much like our own House of Representatives. This new system is encouraging more Sunnis to join in the democratic process because it ensures that Sunnis will be well represented, even if the terrorists and Saddamists try to intimidate voters in the Provinces where most Sunnis live.

More Sunnis are involved because they see Iraqi democracy succeeding. They have learned a lesson of democracy: They must participate to have a voice in their nation's affairs. A leading Sunni who had boycotted the January vote put it this way: "The Sunnis are now ready to participate." A Sunni sheik explains why Sunnis must join the process: "In order not to be marginalized, we need power in the National Assembly." As more Sunnis join the political process, the Saddamists and remaining rejectionists will be marginalized. As more Sunnis join the political process, they will protect the interests of their community.

Like the Shi'a and Kurds, who face daily attacks from the terrorists and Saddamists, many Sunnis who join the political process are being targeted by the enemies of a free Iraq. The Iraqi Islamic Party—a Sunni party that boycotted the January vote and now supports elections—has seen its offices bombed. And a party leader reports that at least 10 members have been killed since the party announced it would field candidates in Thursday's elections. Recently, a top Sunni electoral official visited the Sunni stronghold of Ba'quba. He went to encourage local leaders to participate in the elections. During his visit, a roadside bomb went off. It rattled his convoy, but it didn't stop it. He says this about the attempt on his life: "The bomb is nothing compared to what we're doing. What we're doing is bigger than the bomb."

By pressing forward and meeting their milestones, the Iraqi people have built momentum for freedom and democracy. They've encouraged those outside the process to come in. At every stage, there was enormous pressure to let the deadlines slide, with skeptics and pessimists declaring that Iraqis were not ready for self-government. At every stage, Iraqis proved the skeptics and pessimists wrong. At every stage, Iraqis have exposed the errors of those in our country and across the world who question the universal appeal of liberty. By meeting their milestones, Iraqis are defeating a brutal enemy, rejecting a murderous ideology, and choosing freedom over terror.

This week, elections won't be perfect, and a successful vote is not the end of the process. Iraqis still have more difficult work ahead, and our coalition and the new Iraqi Government will face many challenges, including in four critical errors—areas: ensuring Iraqi security, forming an inclusive Iraqi Government, encouraging Iraqi reconciliation, and maintaining Iraqi democracy in a tough neighborhood.

The first key challenge is security. As democracy takes hold in Iraq, the terrorists and Saddamists will continue to use violence. They will try to break our will and intimidate the Iraqi people and their leaders. These enemies aren't going to give up because of a successful election. They understand what is at stake in Iraq. They know that as democracy takes root in that country, their hateful ideology will suffer a devastating blow, and the Middle East will have a clear example of freedom and prosperity and hope.

So our coalition will continue to hunt down the terrorists and Saddamists. We'll continue training Iraqi security forces to take the lead in the fight and defend their new democracy. As the Iraqi security forces stand up, coalition forces can stand down. And when victory is achieved, our troops will then return home with the honor they have earned.

The second key challenge is forming an inclusive government that protects the interests of all Iraqis and encourages more in the rejectionist camp to abandon violence and embrace politics. Early next year, Iraq's new Parliament will come to Baghdad and select a Prime Minister and a presidency council and a cabinet of ministers. Two-thirds of the new Parliament must agree on the top leadership posts, and this will demand negotiation and compromise. It will require patience by America and our coalition allies. This new government will face many tough decisions on issues such as security and reconstruction and economic reform. Iraqi leaders will also have to review and possibly amend the Constitution and ensure that this historic document earns the broad support of all Iraqi communities. By taking these steps, Iraqi leaders will build a strong and lasting democracy. This is an important step in helping to defeat the terrorists and the Saddamists.

The third key challenge is establishing rule of law and the culture of reconciliation. Iraqis still have to overcome longstanding ethnic and religious tensions and the legacy of three decades of dictatorship. During the regime of Saddam Hussein, Shi'a, Kurds, and other groups were brutally oppressed, and for some, there is now a temptation to take justice into their own hands. Recently, U.S. and Iraqi troops have discovered prisons in Iraq where mostly Sunni men were held, some of whom have appeared to have been beaten and tortured. This conduct is unacceptable, and the Prime Minister and other Iraqi officials have condemned these abuses. An investigation has been launched, and we support these efforts. Those who committed these crimes must be held to account.

We will continue helping Iraqis build an impartial system of justice that protects all of Iraq's citizens. Millions of Iraqis are seeing their independent judiciary in action, as their former dictator, Saddam Hussein, is put on trial in Baghdad. The man who

once struck fear in the hearts of Iraqis has heard his victims recount the acts of torture and murder that he ordered. One Iraqi watching the proceedings said: "We all feel happiness about this fair trial." Slowly but surely, with the help of our coalition, Iraqis are replacing the rule of a tyrant with the rule of law and ensuring equal justice for all their citizens.

Oh, I know some fear the possibility that Iraq could break apart and fall into a civil war. I don't believe these fears are justified. They're not justified so long as we do not abandon the Iraqi people in their hour of need. Encouraging reconciliation and human rights in a society scarred by decades of arbitrary violence and sectarian division is not going to be easy, and it's not going to happen overnight. Yet the Iraqi Government has a process in place to resolve even the most difficult issues through negotiate, debate, and compromise. And the United States, along with the United Nations and the Arab League and other international partners, will support these efforts to help resolve these issues. And as Iraqis continue to develop the habits of liberty, they will gain confidence in the future and ensure that Iraqi nationalism trumps Iraqi sectarianism.

A fourth key challenge is for the Iraqis to maintain their newfound freedoms in a tough neighborhood. Iraq's neighbor to the east, Iran, is actively working to undermine a free Iraq. Iran doesn't want democracy in Iraq to succeed, because a free Iraq threatens the legitimacy of Iran's oppressive theocracy. Iraq's neighbor to the west, Syria, is permitting terrorists to use that territory to cross into Iraq. The vast majority of Iraqis do not want to live under an Iranian-style theocracy, and they don't want Syria to allow the transit of bombers and killers into Iraq. And the United States of America will stand with the Iraqi people against the threats from these neighbors.

We'll continue to encourage greater support from the Arab world and the broader international community. Many Arab States have kept the new Iraq at arm's distance. Yet as more Arab States are beginning to recognize that a free Iraq is here to stay, they're starting to give Iraq's new Government more support. Recently, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, and Jordan have welcomed the Iraqi Prime Minister on official visits. Last month, the Arab League hosted a meeting in Cairo to promote national reconciliation among Iraqis, and another such meeting is planned for next year in Baghdad.

These are important steps, and Iraq's neighbors need to do more. Arab leaders are beginning to recognize that the choice in Iraq is between democracy and terrorism, and there is no middle ground. The success of Iraqi democracy is in their vital interests because if the terrorists prevail in Iraq, they will then target other Arab nations.

International support for Iraq's democracy is growing as well. Other nations have pledged more than $13 billion in assistance to Iraq, and we call on them, those who have pledged assistance, to make good on their commitments. The World Bank recently approved its first loan to Iraq in over 30 years, lending the Iraqi Government $100 million to improve the Iraqi school system. The United Nations is playing a vital role in Iraq. They assisted in last January's elections and the negotiations for the Constitution and in the recent constitutional referendum. And at the request of the Iraqi Government, the U.N. Security Council unanimously approved a resolution extending the mandate of the multinational force in Iraq through 2006. Earlier this year, the European Union cohosted a conference for more than 80 countries and international organizations, so they can better coordinate their efforts to help Iraqis rebuild their nation. Whatever differences there were over the decision to liberate Iraq, all free nations now share a common interest, building an Iraq that will fight terror and be a source of stability and freedom in a troubled region of the world.

The challenges ahead are complex and difficult, yet Iraqis are determined to overcome them and build a free nation. And they require our support. Millions of Iraqis will put their lives on the line this Thursday in the name of liberty and democracy. And 160,000 of America's finest are putting their lives on the line so Iraqis can succeed. The American and Iraqi people share the same interests and the same enemies, and by helping democracy succeed in Iraq, we bring greater security to our citizens here at home.

The terrorists know that democracy is their enemy, and they will continue fighting freedom's progress with all the hateful determination they can muster. Yet the Iraqi people are stepping forward to claim their liberty, and they will have it. When the new Iraqi Government takes office next year, Iraqis will have the only constitutional democracy in the Arab world, and Americans will have a partner for peace and moderation in the Middle East.

People across the broader Middle East are drawing and will continue to draw inspiration from Iraq's progress, and the terrorists' powerful myth is being destroyed. In a 1998 *fatwa*, Usama bin Laden argued that the suffering of the Iraqi people was justification for his declaration of war on America. Now bin Laden and Al Qaida are the direct cause of the Iraqi people's suffering. As more Muslims across the world see this, they're turning against the terrorists. As the hope of liberty spreads in the Middle East, the terrorists will lose their sponsors, lose their recruits, and lose the sanctuaries they need to plan new attacks.

A free Iraq is not going to be a quiet Iraq. It will be a nation full of passionate debate and vigorous political activity. It will be a nation that continues to face some level of violence. Yet Iraqis are showing they have the patience and the courage to make democracy work, and Americans have the patience and courage to help them succeed.

We've done this kind of work before. We must have confidence in our cause. In World War II, free nations defeated fascism and helped our former adversaries, Germany and Japan, build strong democracies, and today, these nations are allies in securing the peace. In the cold war, free nations defeated communism and helped our former Warsaw Pact adversaries become strong democracies, and today, nations of Central and Eastern Europe are allies in the war on terror.

Today in the Middle East, freedom is once again contending with a totalitarian ideology that seeks to sow anger and hatred and despair. And like fascism and communism before, the hateful ideologies that use terror will be defeated by the unstoppable power of freedom.

And the advance of freedom in the Middle East requires freedom in Iraq. By helping Iraqis build a lasting democracy, we will spread the hope of liberty across a troubled region; we'll gain new allies in the cause of freedom. By helping Iraqis build a strong democracy, we're adding to our own security, and like a generation before us, we're laying the foundation of peace for generations to come.

Not far from here, where we gather today, is a symbol of freedom familiar to all Americans, the Liberty Bell. When the Declaration of Independence was first read in public, the Liberty Bell was sounded in celebration, and a witness said, "It rang as if it meant something." Today, the call of liberty is being heard in Baghdad and Basra and other Iraqi cities, and its sound is echoing across the broader Middle East. From Damascus to Tehran, people hear it, and they know it means something. It means that the days of tyranny and terror are ending, and a new day of hope and freedom is dawning.

Thank you for letting me come.

I got a little extra time on my hands, so I thought I might answer some questions. [*Laughter*] Yes, ma'am.

Casualties in Iraq

Q. Since the inception of the Iraqi war, I'd like to know the approximate total of Iraqis who have been killed, and by Iraqis I include civilians, military, police, insurgents, translators.

The President. How many Iraqi citizens have died in this war? I would say 30,000, more or less, have died as a result of the initial incursion and the ongoing violence against Iraqis. We've lost about 2,140 of our own troops in Iraq.

Yes.

Progress in Iraq/War on Terror

Q. Mr. President, thank you—[*inaudible*]——

The President. I'll repeat the question. If I don't like it, I'll make it up. [*Laughter*]

Q. Thank you for coming to the city where liberty was born. Central to your policy in Iraq is the role of the Iraqis. We hear wildly different tales about how the Iraqis are doing in their own area of defense. Could you give us your perspective on how they're doing, how well their military training is going, what you feel their capability is to do the task that you want them to do, to clear up some of the wildly different impressions that we hear about?

The President. No, I appreciate that. When we first began training—our strategy all along has been to train Iraqis so they can take the fight and succeed in what we're trying to do, which is a democracy, a democracy which will serve as an example for others, a democracy which will join us in the fight on terror, a democracy which will help us prevent other countries from becoming safe haven for terrorists who still want to kill us. That's—that was our objective. And all along we wanted the Iraqis to be able to do—take the fight.

When we first got going, we said, "We'll train an army that will be able to deal with external threats and a civil defense corps that will be able to deal with internal threats." And the problem with that strategy was that the internal threats were a heck of a lot more severe than the external threats, and the army—the civilian corps we trained was not properly trained and equipped.

So we adjusted. We trained everybody for the army and—recognizing that the army is going to have to not only take the fight to the enemy—or the new army take the fight to the enemy, but when we clear enemies out of places like Mosul, that there has to be an Iraqi army presence to earn the confidence of the people.

When the war first got going, we'd move into Mosul, clear out an enemy, leave, and the enemy would return. And so the Iraqi people had no confidence in the future. They were—they didn't dare, for example, tell coalition forces or Iraqi forces the names of those who were killing their citizens because they didn't have the confidence there would be a force to protect them. And so we began the process of clearing out and holding with more and more trained Iraqi forces. And now the Iraqi forces are helping to rebuild these cities. Democracy is only going to succeed if people say, "My life is going to be better." I mean, no different a campaign here—you know, "Vote for me; I want to help improve your life."

And that's what—and so the strategy has been to—let me say, we adjusted our strategy, and there's about 200,000-plus capable units. Now, not all of them are ready to take the fight to the enemy. In order to have a division or a battalion ready to fight, you've got to be able to communicate; you've got to be able to move; you've got to be able to have logistical supplies. But more and more of the Iraqis are in the lead in the fight, and more and more Iraqis are being trained so they can hold the positions once we clear.

We are not completed—we haven't completed the job of training the Iraqis. But what is beginning to happen is, is that you're beginning to see our troops step back from the fight. I don't know if you realize, we had some 90 bases in Iraq, and

I think we've closed about 40—or turned over—closed or turned over 40 of those bases to the Iraqis. In other words, our profile is beginning to move back as the Iraqis get trained up, so that we can continue working on training and also help them chase down Zarqawi and his buddies. They're—these guys are very tough, and they're coldblooded killers.

The enemy has got one weapon. See, they can't defeat us militarily. What they can do is, they can and will kill innocent people in the hopes of trying to get the United States of America to leave the battlefield early. The only way we can lose is if we lose our nerve. And they know that, and they've stated that publicly.

And—but the training is going much better than it was in the first year. The—and we've just got more to do, and we need to do it, because a free Iraq, again, will be an important ally in this war. This is a global struggle we're in. It's—this isn't an enemy that is isolated, kind of an angry group of people. These are people that have got a totalitarian vision. They've got designs and ambitions. They've laid out their strategy, and they explained their tactics. And we've got to listen to them and take them seriously. And part of their tactics is to create vacuums so that their hateful ideology flows in.

They—listen, the attack of September the 11th was a part of a broad strategy to get us to retreat from the world. And that—people say, "Well, he's making it up, that they want to establish a totalitarian empire that stretches from Spain to Indonesia." I'm telling you what they said, not me. This is what Zawahiri has said—the number-two man in Al Qaida. It seems like to me, we need to take it seriously when the enemy says something.

Kind of getting off subject here, but—yes, sir.

America's Influence Abroad

Q. Mr. President, I'm a proud U.S. citizen, naturalized, and card-carrying Republican. I voted for you both times. I grew up in India, a Sunni. In fact, the President of the Republic of India is a Sunni. And I think it's a great testimony to this Nation that was—the vision of which was laid out within a few—half a mile of here, that somebody like me can be in a position of leadership and be successfully engaged in contributing to the current and future economic well-being of this Nation.

Mr. President, I support your efforts in Iraq. But I'd like to know, what are we going to do in the broader battle in creating a favorable image and reaching out to people across the world, so that people like me all over the world can be passionate supporters of the United States?

The President. Yes, I appreciate that. First of all, success will help the image of the United States. Look, I recognize we got an image issue, particularly when you got television stations, Arabic television stations that are constantly just pounding America, creating—saying, "America is fighting Islam; Americans can't stand Muslims; this is a war against a religion." And we've got to, obviously, do a better job of reminding people that ours is not a nation that rejects religion; ours is a nation that accepts people of all faith and that the great strength of America is the capacity for people to worship freely.

It's difficult. I mean, their propaganda machine is pretty darn intense. And so we're constantly sending out messages; we're constantly trying to reassure people, but we're also acting. And that's what's important for our citizens to realize. Our position in the world is such that I don't think we can retreat. I think we have a duty and an obligation to use our vast influence to help.

I cite two examples of where I think it will make a big—of where American image in the Muslim world will be improved. One is the tsunami. The tsunamis hit; it was the United States military, through the USS *Abraham Lincoln*, that

provided the logistical organization necessary to get the—to save a lot of lives. We moved. A lot of people kind of sat around and discussed—not us. We saw a problem, and we moved.

Same in Pakistan. The earthquake in Pakistan is devastating. The United States of America was first on the scene. We got a lot of kids flying choppers all around that country providing help and aid.

And so I guess what I'm saying to you is, is that a proper use of influence that helps improve people's lives is the best way to affect—to change the image of our country and to defeat the propaganda. Having said all that, a lot of people want to come to America. The image may be bad, but give them a chance; all you who want to come to America, raise your hand—there's a lot wanting to come. That's another issue, which is immigration reform.

But thank you for that. One thing America must never do is lose our capacity to take people from all walks of life and help them become an American first and foremost. That's what distinguishes us from other cultures and other nations. You can come from wherever you are, and I can come from Texas, and we both share the same deal—we're Americans first and foremost. I happen to be a Methodist. You're a Sunni. [*Laughter*]

Yes, ma'am.

Lessons of September 11, 2001

Q. Mr. President, I would like to know why it is that you and others in your administration keep linking 9/11 to the invasion of Iraq when no respected journalist or Middle Eastern expert confirmed that such a link existed.

The President. What did she—I missed the question. Sorry. I didn't—I beg your pardon; I didn't hear you—seriously.

Q. I would like to know why you and others in your administration invoke 9/11 as justification for the invasion of Iraq——

The President. Yes.

Q. ——when no respected journalists or other Middle Eastern experts confirm that such a link existed.

The President. I appreciate that. Nine/eleven changed my look on foreign policy. I mean, it said that oceans no longer protect us, that we can't take threats for granted, that if we see a threat, we've got to deal with it. It doesn't have to be militarily, necessarily, but we got to deal with it. We can't just hope for the best anymore.

And so the first decision I made, as you know, was to deal with the Taliban in Afghanistan, because they were harboring terrorists. This is where the terrorists planned and plotted. And the second decision—which was a very difficult decision for me, by the way, and it's one that I didn't take lightly—was that Saddam Hussein was a threat. He is a declared enemy of the United States. He had used weapons of mass destruction. The entire world thought he had weapons of mass destruction. The United Nations had declared in more than 10—I can't remember the exact number of resolutions—that "Disclose or disarm, or face serious consequences." I mean, there was a serious international effort to say to Saddam Hussein, "You're a threat." And the 9/11 attacks extenuated that threat, as far as I was concerned.

And so we gave Saddam Hussein the chance to disclose or disarm, and he refused. And I made a tough decision, and knowing what I know today, I'd make the decision again. Removing Saddam Hussein makes this world a better place and America a safer country.

Last question. I've actually got something to do. [*Laughter*] You're paying me all this money; I'd better get back to work. [*Laughter*]

Hold on a second. Got a guy here.

Homeland Security/Spread of Democracy

Q. Mr. President, I'm from the Phelps School. I'm a supporter of yours.

The President. Oops, that kind of prejudices your question. [*Laughter*]

Q. Well, I have a question for you. Do you feel that since invading Iraq, the threat of terrorism on U.S. soil has been reduced significantly?

The President. I think it's been reduced. I don't think we're safe. What will really give me confidence to say that we're safe is when I can tell the American people, "We've got the capacity to know exactly where the enemy is moving." This is a different kind of war. These people hide. They're patient, and they're sophisticated. And that's why our intelligence gathering is really important.

You know, occasionally they come out and want to fight like they're doing in Iraq. This guy Zarqawi has sworn his allegiance to bin Laden. He has—he's declared his intentions. But there's a lot of them who lurk and hide. And what we've really got to do is continue to hone our intelligence gathering to make sure that we can, as best as possible, understand their intents and watch their movements. And this requires international cooperation.

I will tell you the international cooperation, when it comes to sharing intelligence, is good. It requires us being able to cut off their money. They move money around. They can't—it turns out, they can't launch attacks without money. And so we're doing the best we can to work with others to find out where their money is moving. And that way, it will be a—give us a chance to find out where they are.

The long run in this war is going to require a change of governments in parts of the world. It's—and this is why it's very important for me to continue to remind the American people about what's taking place in history. One of my favorite stories is to tell people about—or go-bys—is to tell people about my relationship with Koizumi, Prime Minister Koizumi of Japan. He's an interesting guy. He likes Elvis, for example, which is—[*laughter*]—interesting—[*laughter*]. He's a friend. He's also a friend when it comes to peace. He's a reliable, steady ally when it comes to dealing with North Korea. North Korea is a country that has declared boldly they've got nuclear weapons, they counterfeit our money, and they're starving their people to death. And it's good to have an ally that understands human rights and the condition of the human being are vital for this world and world peace.

And yet, 60 years ago, my dad fought against the Japanese—many of your relatives did as well. They were the sworn enemy of the United States. I find it amazing—I don't know if you find it amazing—I find it amazing that I sit down with this guy, strategizing about how to make the world a more peaceful place, when my dad and others fought him.

And so what happened? Now, 60 years seems like a long time, particularly if you're 59 like me. [*Laughter*] But it's not all that long in history, when you think about it. And what happened was, a Japanese-style democracy emerged. Democracies yield the peace. That's what history has shown us. That's what I tried to say in my peroration in this speech. That's a long word. I'm doing it for the Senator, Specter, here. [*Laughter*] Just showing off, Senator, just trying to look good in front of the folks here at home. [*Laughter*] But it's an accurate portrayal of what has happened. Democracies yield the peace.

So the fundamental question is, do we have the confidence and universal values to help change a troubled part of the world? If you're a supporter of Israel, I would strongly urge you to help other countries become democracies. Israel's long-term survival depends upon the spread of democracy in the Middle East. I recognize people have—I fully recognize that some say it's impossible, that maybe only a certain kind of people can be—can accept democracy. I just—I reject that. I don't agree with that. I believe democracy—the desire to be free is universal. That's what I believe. And if you believe that, then you've got to act on it. That doesn't mean

militarily. But that means using the influence of the United States to work with others to help freedom spread.

And that's what you're seeing in Iraq. And it's hard. It's hard for a country that has come from dictatorship 2½ years ago to become a democracy. It is hard work. There's a lot of resentment and anger and bitterness. But I believe it's going to happen. And the only way it won't happen is if we leave, if we lose our nerve, if we allow the terrorists to achieve their objective. The only way we can lose this is for us to say to the terrorists, "Maybe you aren't dangerous after all—you know, by leaving, maybe that you'll become hospitable, you know, decent citizens of the world." That's not reality. And my job as the President is to see the world the way it is, not the way we hope it is.

I, again, want to thank you for giving me the chance to come and deliver this speech. I'm grateful for your interest. May God bless you all, and may God continue to bless America.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:16 a.m. at the Park Hyatt Philadelphia. In his remarks, he referred to Buntzie Churchill, president, and William R. Sasso, vice chairman, board of directors, World Affairs Council of Philadelphia; Usama bin Laden, leader of the Al Qaida terrorist organization; Prime Minister Ibrahim al-Jafari, Deputy President Ghazi al-Ujayl al-Yawr, Minister of Defense Sadun al-Dulaymi, and Speaker of the Transistional National Assembly Hajim al-Hassani of Iraq. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of these remarks.

Statement on the Death of Gebran Tueni
December 12, 2005

The murder of Gebran Tueni, a Lebanese patriot, Member of Parliament, and publisher of one of Lebanon's leading newspapers, is yet another act of violence aimed at subjugating Lebanon to Syrian domination and silencing the Lebanese press. Mr. Tueni was a well-known opponent of Syrian interference in Lebanon. Like so many other brave Lebanese, Mr. Tueni knew that his courageous stand on behalf of Lebanon's independence and freedom carried great risk. Despite these dangers to his life, he returned to Lebanon a day before his assassination to continue his efforts to promote freedom and democracy in his country.

I strongly condemn the savage attack on Mr. Tueni and extend my condolences to his family and the families of the other innocent victims killed in Lebanon. Syria must comply with United Nations Security Council Resolutions 1559, 1595, and 1636 and end its interference in Lebanon once and for all.

Remarks Following a Roundtable Discussion on Medicare in Springfield, Virginia
December 13, 2005

Dr. Mark McClellan and I have just heard from folks who have been analyzing and/or helping people analyze the current

Medicare drug benefit and current Medicare—modernized Medicare program.

Awhile ago, I worked with the Congress to modernize and strengthen Medicare for our seniors. And the reason we did, because if the Government commits to health care for our seniors, it ought to be a program that does the following things: One, provide modern medicine; and two, give seniors a variety of options from which to match their needs to that which is available.

We fully recognize that for some seniors, that this is a daunting task. When you give people choice and options, it is—it can be a situation where people say, "I don't really—this is something I may not want to do." And so I want to assure the seniors the following things: One, the Medicare—the new Medicare plan is voluntary; it's optional; two, that there are people around who are willing to help explain the program for you and to you. There's—when you have choices to make, there's going to be some—you do have choices to make—and somebody will be able to sit down with you and explain why this program is good.

For example, Eloise is talking about the fact that she's spending a lot on prescription drugs, and under the new Medicare plan, she's able to choose a program that will substantially reduce the cost of her prescription drugs. Low-income seniors will get substantial help. People will be able to match a program to their specific needs.

And what we want to assure seniors around the country is that there is help. You can call 1–800–MEDICARE. You can get on the Internet with medicare.gov. Ask your son or daughter; ask people in your church; ask people in AARP; ask people in your community center to help you look at what's available for you. It's a good deal. It's a good deal for our seniors.

And so one of the reasons we have come today is to encourage people to see what is available in the new law. Enrollment began in mid-November. The program will begin in January of this year. We urge you to look at the options available to you and sign up by May of next year.

This is Government that has recognized it has a responsibility to help our seniors. And the bill I was fortunate enough to sign into law does just that.

Again, I want to thank you all for joining us. I want to thank you for your hard work, Charlotte. Ellen DeMucci is a pharmacist. One of the interesting groups that are reaching out to our seniors are those who are behind the counter. Ellen and her fellow pharmacists interface with seniors on a daily basis. They know the needs of seniors. They, in many cases, have analyzed what's available for our seniors. They're available to help seniors fill out the forms. She has worked with Eloise.

Again, I urge our fellow citizens to help our seniors realize what's available in this wonderful program. And I finally want to thank Senator Allen and Congressman Davis for joining us as well. They're interested in this program. They're interested in the people of Virginia, and they want to make sure the seniors of Virginia get all the options available for them to choose from.

Thank you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:36 a.m. at the Greenspring Village Retirement Community. In his remarks, he referred to Dr. Charlotte S. Yeh, Regional Administrator, Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services.

Remarks to the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars
December 14, 2005

Thank you very much. Please be seated. Thank you for the warm welcome. I'm delighted to be here with the men and women of the Wilson Center. According to your mission statement, the Center was created to bring together two groups, political leaders and scholars. I see some of the political leaders who are here, and I presume you've invited me to uphold the scholars' end. [*Laughter*]

I've come to discuss an issue of vital importance to the American people, and that is victory in the war on terror. On September the 11th, 2001, our Nation awoke to a sudden attack, and we accepted new responsibilities. We are confronting new dangers with firm resolve. We're hunting down the terrorists and their supporters. We will fight this war without wavering, and we will prevail.

In the war on terror, Iraq is now the central front. And over the last few weeks, I've been discussing our political, economic, and military strategy for victory in that country. An historic election will take place tomorrow in Iraq. And as millions of Iraqis prepare to cast their ballots, I want to talk today about why we went into Iraq, why we stayed in Iraq, and why we cannot and will not leave Iraq until victory is achieved.

I want to thank Ambassador Gildenhorn for inviting me and introducing me. And I want to thank the members of the Board of Trustees who are here. I appreciate Lee Hamilton, who serves our Nation so well in so many different capacities. Thank you for being the president and director of the Woodrow Wilson Center.

I'm proud to be traveling today with members of my Cabinet: Secretary of State Condi Rice; Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld; and Secretary of Homeland Security Mike Chertoff. Thank you all for coming. I appreciate the Members of the Congress who are here. Thanks for taking time to come. I want to thank the members of the diplomatic corps that have joined us today. And thank you all for being here as well.

We are living through a watershed moment in the story of freedom. Most of the focus now is on this week's elections, and rightly so. Iraqis will go to the polls to choose a government that will be the only constitutional democracy in the Arab world. Yet we need to remember that these elections are also a vital part of a broader strategy for protecting the American people against the threat of terrorism.

We saw the future the terrorists intend for our Nation on that fateful morning of September the 11th, 2001. That day we learned that vast oceans and friendly neighbors are no longer enough to protect us. September the 11th changed our country. It changed the policy of our Government. We adopted a new strategy to protect the American people: We would hunt down the terrorists wherever they hide; we would make no distinction between the terrorists and those who harbor them; and we would advance our security at home by advancing freedom in the Middle East.

September the 11th also changed the way I viewed threats like Saddam Hussein. We saw the destruction terrorists could cause with airplanes loaded with jet fuel, and we imagined the destruction they could cause with even more powerful weapons. At the time, the leaders of both political parties recognized this new reality: We cannot allow the world's most dangerous men to get their hands on the world's most dangerous weapons. In an age of terrorism and weapons of mass destruction, if we wait for threats to fully materialize, we will have waited too long.

We removed Saddam Hussein from power because he was a threat to our security. He had pursued and used weapons

of mass destruction. He sponsored terrorists. He ordered his military to shoot at American and British pilots patrolling the no-fly zones. He invaded his neighbors. He fought a war against the United States and a broad coalition. He had declared that the United States of America was his enemy.

Over the course of a decade, Saddam Hussein refused to comply with more than a dozen United Nations resolutions, including demands that he respect the rights of the Iraqi people, disclose his weapons, and abide by the terms of a 1991 cease-fire. He deceived international inspectors, and he denied them the unconditional access they needed to do their jobs. When a unanimous Security Council gave him one final chance to disclose and disarm or face serious consequences, he refused to comply with that final opportunity. At any point along the way, Saddam Hussein could have avoided war by complying with the just demands of the international community. The United States did not choose war; the choice was Saddam Hussein's.

When we made the decision to go into Iraq, many intelligence agencies around the world judged that Saddam possessed weapons of mass destruction. This judgment was shared by the intelligence agencies of governments who did not support my decision to remove Saddam. And it is true that much of the intelligence turned out to be wrong. As President, I'm responsible for the decision to go into Iraq, and I'm also responsible for fixing what went wrong by reforming our intelligence capabilities. And we're doing just that. At the same time, we must remember that an investigation after the war by chief weapons inspector Charles Duelfer found that Saddam was using the U.N. Oil-For-Food Programme to influence countries and companies in an effort to undermine sanctions, with the intent of restarting his weapons programs once the sanctions collapsed and the world looked the other way.

Given Saddam's history and the lessons of September the 11th, my decision to remove Saddam Hussein was the right decision. Saddam was a threat, and the American people and the world is better off because he is no longer in power. We are in Iraq today because our goal has always been more than the removal of a brutal dictator; it is to leave a free and democratic Iraq in its place.

As I stated in a speech in the lead-up to the war, a liberated Iraq could show the power of freedom to transform the Middle East by bringing hope and progress to the lives of millions. So we're helping the Iraqi people build a lasting democracy that is peaceful and prosperous and an example for the broader Middle East. The terrorists understand this, and that is why they have now made Iraq the central front in the war on terror.

The enemy of freedom in Iraq is a combination of rejectionists and Saddamists and terrorists. The rejectionists are ordinary Iraqis, mostly Sunni Arabs, who miss the privileged status they had under the regime of Saddam Hussein. We believe that, over time, most of this group will be persuaded to support the democratic Iraq led by a Federal Government that is strong enough to protect minority rights. We're encouraged by the indications that many Sunnis intend to participate in tomorrow's elections.

The Saddamists are former regime loyalists who harbor dreams of returning to power, and they're trying to foment anti-democratic sentiment amongst the larger Sunni community. Yet they lack popular support, and over time, they can be marginalized and defeated by the security forces of a free Iraq.

The terrorists affiliated with or inspired by Al Qaida are the smallest but most lethal group. They are led by a brutal terrorist named Zarqawi. He's Al Qaida's chief operations officer in Iraq. He has stated his allegiance to Usama bin Laden. The terrorists have ambitions; they have goals. They want to stop the advance of freedom in

Iraq. They want to make Iraq what Afghanistan was under the Taliban, a safe haven from which they can plot attacks against our people. There is no limit to their brutality. They kill the innocent to achieve their aims. This is an enemy without conscience. And against such enemy, there is only one effective response: We will never back down; we will never give in; and we will never accept anything less than complete victory.

Last month, my administration released a document called the "National Strategy for Victory in Iraq." In recent weeks, I've been discussing our strategy with the American people. At the U.S. Naval Academy, I spoke about how we changed our approach to training Iraqi security forces, so they can take the fight to the enemy and eventually take responsibility for the security of their citizens without major foreign assistance. Iraqi forces are becoming more and more capable.

This time last year, there was only a handful of Iraqi battalions ready for combat. Now there are more than 125 Iraqi army and police combat battalions in the fight against the terrorists. Of these, more than 70 Iraqi battalions are fighting side by side with coalition forces, and more than 50 others are taking the lead in the fight. So far, in December, there have been more than 900 combat operations in Iraq at the company level or above, and 75 percent of these involved Iraqi security forces either in the lead or fighting side by side with our coalition. As these Iraqi forces grow in size and strength, American and coalition forces can concentrate on training Iraqis and hunting down high-value targets like Zarqawi and his associates.

Last week before the Council on Foreign Relations, I explained how we changed our approach to help Iraqis hold and rebuild cities taken from the enemy and how to help them revitalize Iraq's infrastructure and economy. Today, many cities like Mosul and Najaf are coming back to life, and Iraq's economy is growing. Thousands of new businesses have opened in Iraq, personal income is up, and according to one survey, 7 in 10 Iraqis say their lives are going well, and nearly two-thirds expect things to improve in the next year.

Earlier this week at the Philadelphia World Affairs Council, I spoke in depth about how we changed our approach to helping the Iraqis build their democracy. At the request of Iraqi leaders, we accelerated the transition to Iraqi self-government. We set four major milestone to guide Iraq's transition to constitutional democracy: The transfer of sovereignty; elections for a transitional government; the adoption of a democratic Constitution; and elections for a new government under that Constitution. In spite of the violence, Iraqis have met every milestone, and this is changing the political landscape in Iraq.

Sunni Arabs who failed to participate in the January elections are now campaigning vigorously in this week's elections, and we can expect a higher turnout of Sunni voters. As Sunnis join the political process, Iraqi democracy becomes more inclusive, and the terrorists and Saddamists are becoming marginalized.

Each of the changes we have made in our approach in Iraq is helping us meet the hard realities and the facts on the ground. We've adapted our tactics. We have fixed what was not working, and we have listened to those who know best, our military commanders and the Iraqi people.

Our tactics continue to change, but our goal in Iraq has not changed—a free and democratic Iraq. I strongly believe a democratic Iraq is a crucial part of our strategy to defeat the terrorists, because only democracy can bring freedom and reconciliation to Iraq and peace to this troubled part of the world. Our efforts to advance freedom in Iraq are driven by our vital interests and our deepest beliefs. America was founded on the principle that all men are created equal, and we believe that the people of the Middle East desire freedom as much as we do. History has shown that

free nations are peaceful nations. And as Iraqi democracy takes hold, Iraqi citizens will have a stake in a common and peaceful future.

As we advance the cause of freedom in Iraq, our Nation can proceed with confidence because we have done this kind of work before. After World War II, President Harry Truman believed that the way to help bring peace and prosperity to Asia was to plant the seeds of freedom and democracy in Japan. Like today, there were many skeptics and pessimists who said that the Japanese were not ready for democracy. Fortunately, President Harry Truman stuck to his guns. He believed, as I do, in freedom's power to transform an adversary into an ally. And because he stayed true to his convictions, today Japan is one of the world's freest and most prosperous nations and one of America's closest allies in keeping the peace. The spread of freedom to Iraq and the Middle East requires the same confidence and persistence, and it will lead to the same results.

The people of Iraq are now seeing some of the tangible benefits of their new democracy. They see that as freedom advances, their lives are improving. Iraqis have approved a bold Constitution that guarantees the rule of law and freedom of assembly and property rights and freedom of speech and the press and women's rights and the right to vote. They see their freedom increasingly being defended by their own soldiers and police instead of foreign forces, and they see that freedom is bringing opportunity and a better life.

The Iraqis still face many challenges, including security and reconstruction and economic reform. But they are building a strong democracy that can handle these challenges and that will be a model for the Middle East. Freedom in Iraq will inspire reformers from Damascus to Tehran. This new Iraq shares our deepest values, and it shares our most determined enemies. By helping Iraqis build a nation that can govern itself, sustain itself, and defend itself, we will gain an ally in the war on terror and a partner for peace in the Middle East.

The stakes in Iraq are high, and we will not leave until victory has been achieved. Today, there's an intense debate about the importance of Iraq to the war on terror. The constant headlines about car bombings and killings have led some to ask whether our presence in Iraq has made America less secure. This view presumes that if we were not in Iraq, the terrorists would be leaving us alone. The reality is that the terrorists have been targeting America for years, long before we ever set foot in Iraq.

We were not in Iraq in 1993, when the terrorists tried to blow up the World Trade Center in New York. We were not in Iraq in 1998, when the terrorists bombed our embassies in Kenya and Tanzania. We were not in Iraq in 2000, when the terrorists killed 17 American sailors aboard the USS *Cole*. There wasn't a single American soldier in Iraq on September the 11th, 2001, when the terrorists murdered nearly 3,000 people in the worst attack on our home since Pearl Harbor.

These acts are part of a grand strategy by the terrorists. Their stated objective is to drive the United States and coalition forces out of the Middle East so they can gain control of Iraq and use that country as a base from which to launch attacks against America, overthrow moderate governments in the Middle East, and establish a totalitarian Islamic empire that stretches from Spain to Indonesia. Hear the words of the terrorists. In a letter to the terrorist leader Zarqawi, the Al Qaida leader Zawahiri has outlined plans that will unfold in several stages. These are his words: "Expel the Americans from Iraq. Establish an Islamic authority over as much territory as you can to spread its power in Iraq. Extend the jihad wave to secular countries neighboring Iraq," end quote.

To achieve these goals, the terrorists are targeting innocent men, women, and children. The enemy has only the ability to

create chaos for the cameras with spectacular acts of violence. They know they cannot defeat us militarily. So they're trying to break our will in the hopes of getting America to leave the battlefield early, and they cite Vietnam as a reason they can prevail. Zawahiri, in his letter to Zarqawi, wrote, "The aftermath of the collapse of the American power in Vietnam and how they ran and left their agents is noteworthy." In the past, Al Qaida has said that American pullouts of Lebanon and Somalia showed them that America is weak and could be made to run. And now the terrorists think they can make America run in Iraq. There's only one way the terrorists can prevail, if we lose our nerve and leave before the job is done. And that is not going to happen on my watch.

Some in Washington are calling for a rapid and complete withdrawal of our forces in Iraq. They say that our presence there is the cause for instability in Iraq and that the answer is to set a deadline to withdraw. I disagree. I've listened carefully to all the arguments, and there are four reasons why I believe that setting an artificial deadline would be a recipe for disaster.

First, setting an artificial deadline would send the wrong message to the Iraqis. As Iraqis are risking their lives for democracy, it would tell them that America is more interested in leaving than helping them succeed, put at risk all the democratic progress they have made over the past year.

Secondly, setting an artificial deadline would send the wrong message to the enemy. It would tell them that if they wait long enough, America will cut and run. It would vindicate the terrorists' tactics of beheadings and suicide bombings and mass murder. It would embolden the terrorists and invite new attacks on America.

Third, setting an artificial deadline would send the wrong message to the region and the world. It would tell our friends and supporters that America is a weak and unreliable ally, and that when the going gets tough, America will retreat.

Finally, setting an artificial deadline would send the wrong message to the most important audience, our troops on the frontline. It would tell them that America is abandoning the mission they are risking their lives to achieve and that the sacrifice of their comrades killed in this struggle has been in vain. I make this pledge to the families of the fallen: We will carry on the fight; we will complete their mission; and we will win.

Victory will be achieved by meeting certain objectives: When the terrorists and Saddamists can no longer threaten Iraq's democracy; when the Iraqi security forces can protect their own people; and when Iraq is not a safe haven for terrorists to plot attacks against our country. These objectives, not timetables set by politicians in Washington, will drive our force levels in Iraq. As Iraqis stand up, we will stand down. And when victory is achieved, our troops will then come home with the honor they have earned.

One of the blessings of our free society is that we can debate these issues openly, even in a time of war. Most of the debate has been a credit to our democracy, but some have launched irresponsible charges. They say that we act because of oil, that we act in Iraq because of Israel or because we misled the American people. Some of the most irresponsible comments about manipulating intelligence have come from politicians who saw the same intelligence I saw and then voted to authorize the use of force against Saddam Hussein. These charges are pure politics. They hurt the morale of our troops. Whatever our differences in Washington, our men and women in uniform deserve to know that once our politicians vote to send them into harm's way, our support will be with them in good days and bad, and we will settle for nothing less than complete victory.

Before this victory comes, we still have a lot of difficult work ahead. We've made

real progress in the last 2½ years, and the terrorists see this progress, and they're determined to stop it. These enemies are not going to give up because of a successful election. They know that as democracy takes root in Iraq, their hateful ideology will suffer a devastating blow. So we can expect violence to continue.

We can also expect that the elections will be followed by days of uncertainty. We may not know for certain who's won the elections until the early part of January, and that's important for our citizens to understand. It's going to take awhile. It's also going to take awhile for them to form a Government. The work ahead will require patience of the Iraqi people and require our patience as well. Yet we must remember that a free Iraq is in our interests, because a free Iraq will be a beacon of hope. And as the Middle East grows in liberty, the American people will become safer and our Nation will be more secure.

The work ahead will also require continued sacrifice. Yet we can be confident, because history has shown the power of freedom to overcome tyranny. And we can be confident because we have on our side the greatest force for freedom in human history, the men and women of the United States Armed Forces.

One of these men was a Marine lieutenant named Ryan McGlothlin from Lebanon, Virginia. Ryan was a bright young man who had everything going for him, and he always wanted to serve our Nation. He was a valedictorian of his high school class. He graduated from William & Mary with near-perfect grade averages, and he was on a full scholarship at Stanford where he was working toward a doctorate in chemistry.

Two years after the attacks of September the 11th, the young man who had the world at his feet came home from Stanford for a visit. He told his dad, "I just don't feel like I'm doing something that matters. I want to serve my country. I want to protect our lands from terrorists, so I joined the Marines." When his father asked him if there was some other way to serve, Ryan replied that he felt a special obligation to step up because he had been given so much. Ryan didn't support me in the last election, but he supported our mission in Iraq, and he supported his fellow marines.

Ryan was killed last month fighting the terrorists near the—Iraq's Syrian border. In his pocket was a poem that Ryan had read at his high school graduation, and it represented the spirit of this fine marine. The poem was called "Don't Quit."

In our fight to keep America free, we'll never quit. We've lost wonderful Americans like Ryan McGlothlin. We cherish the memory of each one. We pray the loved ones—pray for the loved ones they've left behind, and we count it a privilege to be citizens of a country they served. We also honor them by acknowledging that their sacrifice has brought us to this moment, the birth of a free and sovereign Iraqi nation that will be a friend of the United States and a force for good in a troubled region of the world.

The story of freedom has just begun in the Middle East. And when the history of these days is written, it will tell how America once again defended its own freedom by using liberty to transform nations from bitter foes to strong allies. And history will say that this generation, like generations before, laid the foundation of peace for generations to come.

May God bless you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:08 a.m. in the Ronald Reagan Building and International Trade Center. In his remarks, he referred to Joseph Gildenhorn, chairman, Board of Trustees, Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars; former President Saddam Hussein of Iraq; senior Al Qaida associate Abu Musab Al Zarqawi; Usama bin Laden, leader of the Al Qaida terrorist organization; Ayman Al-Zawahiri, founder of the Egyptian Islamic Jihad and senior Al Qaida associate. The Office of the

Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of these remarks.

Statement on House of Representatives Passage of PATRIOT Act Reauthorization Legislation
December 14, 2005

The PATRIOT Act is essential to fighting the war on terror and preventing our enemies from striking America again. I commend the House for voting today on a bipartisan basis to reauthorize the PATRIOT Act.

The legislation reauthorizes the 16 sunsetting provisions and makes all but two permanent. It bolsters the law's significant protection of privacy and civil liberties. The legislation includes important provisions regarding seaport security, mass transportation security, and terrorist financing. It creates a new National Security Division at the Department of Justice, which was an important recommendation of the WMD Commission that I support. It includes important provisions to strengthen Federal efforts to combat the dangerous proliferation of methamphetamine, which has affected communities across the Nation.

The PATRIOT Act is scheduled to expire at the end of the month, but the terrorist threat will not expire on that schedule. In the war on terror, we cannot afford to be without this law for a single moment. I urge the Senate to pass this legislation promptly and reauthorize the PATRIOT Act.

NOTE: The statement referred to H.R. 3199.

Letter to the Speaker of the House of Representatives on Use of Emergency Supplemental Appropriations
December 14, 2005

Dear Mr. Speaker:

I am notifying the Congress of my intent to use funds provided in Public Law 107–38, the Emergency Supplemental Appropriations Act for Recovery from and Response to Terrorist Attacks on the United States, FY 2001, for improvements to the White House Situation Room to enhance the capabilities of the White House in the war on terrorism.

At this time, $3.3 million will be transferred from the Emergency Response Fund to the Department of Defense. As provided in Public Law 107–38, these funds will be made available to the Department of Defense immediately.

The details of this action are set forth in the enclosed letter from the Director of the Office of Management and Budget.

Sincerely,

GEORGE W. BUSH

Remarks at "Christmas in Washington"
December 11, 2005

Thank you all. Thank you very much. Laura and I have really enjoyed the program tonight. We want to thank all the entertainers for their wonderful performances. I thank Dr. Phil and Robin for being such fine emcees for this event. I want to thank Carrie Underwood, CeCe Winans, Ciara, Jane Monheit, Rascal Flatts, The Click Five, and all the performers and choirs that were here.

We particularly want to thank George Stevens, the executive producer of "Christmas in Washington," and his wife, Liz, as well as Michael Stevens, who's the producer and director of "Christmas in Washington," and his wife, Ali, who is the talent producer for "Christmas in Washington." I thank Dick Parsons, who is the chairman and the CEO of Time Warner, and his wife, Linda.

In this season of giving, we count our blessings, and we remember that we are called on to do good works for those in need. On a special day in Bethlehem, the birth of a child brought hope to the world. And at this time of year, we are especially grateful to those whose work brings hope and health to children.

"Christmas in Washington" supports the Children's National Medical Center. All year long, the doctors and nurses and staff of this hospital are providing care, restoring health, and putting the light back into the eyes of children. I thank tonight's sponsors and contributors for their support of this important work.

As we celebrate the holidays, we also remember the men and women who serve and defend America. Our military men and women and their families have the support and the gratitude of our entire Nation.

To all Americans, Laura and I wish you a joyful and peaceful holiday season. God bless you all, and Merry Christmas.

NOTE: The President spoke at approximately 7 p.m. in the National Building Museum. In his remarks, he referred to television host Phillip "Dr. Phil" McGraw, and his wife, Robin; and Laura, wife of Richard D. Parsons. The transcript was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on December 15.

Remarks Following a Meeting With Iraqi Out-of-Country Voters
December 15, 2005

I've just had the really enjoyable experience of visiting with some Iraqi citizens who voted in the elections today. And you might notice, they've got their—got the little ink-stained fingers there.

And, first of all, I was struck by how joyous they were to be able to vote for a Government, a permanent Government under a new Constitution. We take it for granted in America because we tend to—we vote quite often in this country. These good folks got to vote for the first time for a permanent Government.

And there's a lot of joy, as far as I'm concerned, in seeing the Iraqi people accomplish this major milestone in the march to democracy. Millions of people voted. And I haven't seen all the tabulations of the vote, but we're certain that the turnout was significant and that the violence was down.

And, first, I want to congratulate the Iraqi citizens for being courageous and—

in defying the terrorists and refusing to be cowed into not voting. I believe freedom is universal. I believe the Iraqi citizen cares just as much about freedom and living a free life as the American citizen does.

Secondly, I want to thank our Embassy for doing such good work there and working with the Iraqi citizens to get this vote off. And I want to thank the international community for participating in these elections. This is a major step forward in achieving our objective, which is an ally—having a democratic Iraq, a country able to sustain itself and defend itself, a country that will be an ally in the war on terror, and a country which will send such a powerful example to others in the region, whether they live in Iran or Syria, for example.

I've assured these good Iraqis citizens that the United States will stay with them and complete this job. They've expressed concern about listening to the commentary that we'll leave before the job is done; they don't have to worry. We're doing the right thing. And we've got partners in peace with the Iraqi citizens.

This is a crucial part of the war on terror, as is the PATRIOT Act. The PATRIOT Act was passed 4 years ago. It gave our law enforcement the tools necessary to help protect the—America, the same tools that law enforcement uses, for example, against drug dealers. The PATRIOT Act is set to expire. The House of Representatives, recognizing the value of the PATRIOT Act, voted in a bipartisan way to extend the PATRIOT Act, and now there are Senators who are filibustering the PATRIOT Act. That is a bad decision for the security of the United States. I call upon the Senate to end the filibuster and to pass this important legislation so that we have the tools necessary to defend the United States of America in a time of war.

I want to thank you all again for coming. May God bless your citizens. May God bless a free Iraq. I appreciate you being here.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:47 p.m. in the Oval Office at the White House.

Remarks Following a Meeting With Senators John McCain and John Warner

December 15, 2005

The President. It's my honor to welcome two good friends, the chairman, John Warner, and of course, John McCain—Senator John McCain, here to the Oval Office. We share a common goal and that is to protect the American people and to win the war on terror.

Senator McCain has been a leader to make sure that the United States of America upholds the values of America as we fight and win this war on terror. And we've been happy to work with him to achieve a common objective, and that is to make it clear to the world that this Government does not torture and that we adhere to the international convention of torture, whether it be here at home or abroad. And so we have worked very closely with the Senator and others to achieve that objective as well as to provide protections for those who are on the frontline of fighting the terrorists.

And so I appreciate your hard work, Senator. You're a good man who honors the values of America. I also appreciate the strong support that you've given—both of you have given in the war on terror. The central front of that war is Iraq. Part of

our strategy is to train Iraqis so they can join our forces and fight off the terrorists and, eventually, have the Iraqis be able to stand on their own. The other part is the democratic process that will help marginalize the Saddamists and the rejectionists.

And today the Iraqi people went to the polls. I was so honored to welcome some young Iraqi Fulbright scholars here that were able to vote. And to see the joy—and to hear the joy they expressed and to see the joy on their faces after having just voted in a—for a permanent Government and a new Constitution was just a fantastic experience.

And so I want to welcome you all to the Oval Office. Thanks for coming. Thanks for your good work on behalf of America.

Senator McCain. Thank you, Mr. President. I want to take this opportunity to thank you for the effort that you made to resolve this very difficult issue. I thank you for your active participation in it. And I also want to thank your National Security Adviser, Steve Hadley, who played a very important role as well. And I'm very pleased that we reached this agreement, and now we can move forward and make sure that the whole world knows that, as the President has stated many times, that we do not practice cruel, inhuman treatment or torture.

This agreement basically does two things: One, puts into the Army Field Manual the specific procedures for interrogations. And two, it prohibits cruel, inhumane—or torture.

In our negotiations, there was legitimate concerns raised by the administration concerning the rights of interrogators. And taking language from the Uniform Code of Military Justice, we provide them with legal counsel and certain protections that a reasonable person might view as carrying out of orders, not to contradict the Nuremberg decision, which, of course, said that obeying orders is not a sufficient defense.

I, again, thank the President. And I would like to also repeat, we've sent a message to the world that the United States is not like the terrorists. We have no grief for them, but what we are is a nation that upholds values and standards of behavior and treatment of all people, no matter how evil or bad they are. And I think that this will help us enormously in winning the war for the hearts and minds of people throughout the world in the war on terror.

And again, I want to thank the President. I want to thank Steve Hadley. I thank all the people who worked so hard to come to this agreement. Now I think we can move forward with winning the war on terror and in Iraq.

I thank you, Mr. President.

The President. Thanks, John.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:41 p.m. in the Oval Office at the White House.

Message to the Congress on Export of Accelerometers to the People's Republic of China

December 14, 2005

To the Congress of the United States:

In accordance with the provisions of section 1512 of the Strom Thurmond National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 1999 (Public Law 105–261), I hereby certify that the export of 36 accelerometers to the People's Republic of China's Ministry of Railways, for use in a railroad track geometry measuring system, is not detrimental to the U.S. space launch industry, and that the material and equipment, including any indirect technical benefit that

could be derived from such export, will not measurably improve the missile or space launch capabilities of the People's Republic of China.

GEORGE W. BUSH

The White House,
December 14, 2005.

NOTE: This message was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on December 16. An original was not available for verification of the content of this message.

Remarks Following Discussions With Iraq's Ambassador to the United Nations Samir Shakir Mahmood Sumaida'ie
December 16, 2005

President Bush. It's my honor to welcome the Ambassador to the United Nations from Iraq. This good man has been a—is an Iraqi patriot. He was there in Iraq right after liberation. He helped write the TAL, which is the go-by for the new Constitution. He's serving his country in New York now. He was a voter yesterday in the elections.

The reason he came by to say hello is, we want to talk about what a glorious day it was yesterday for the Iraqi citizens and what we're going to do to work together to make sure that we complete our mission, and that is to have an Iraq that can defend itself and sustain itself, an Iraq that will help us defeat the terrorists in this war on terror, an Iraq that will serve as such a powerful example for other countries in the region that share the same desires as the Iraqi citizen—that is the desire to live in a free world and a free society.

I'm so pleased to hear the stories from his Al Anbar Province, where his grandfather was—lived. And he was telling me about the stories from the village where he was from, about how there's no phone service because the terrorists blew up the capacity for people to make phone calls. But they forgot to shut off the Internet, and people were then describing for this good man what it was like to participate in the democratic process.

It was a remarkable day yesterday in the history of mankind and in the history of freedom.

And so, Mr. Ambassador, I'm glad you're here. Thank you so much for serving with such dignity. Welcome. It's been great talking to you.

Ambassador Sumaida'ie. Thank you, Mr. President. I believe that yesterday was a great day for Iraq; it was a great day for freedom. I think it was the turning point and the beginning of the end of terrorism in Iraq.

Iraqis have written, with their blood, a chapter of their history which will be remembered for decades, with the help of the American troops, with your help, Mr. President, and the help of the American people, which we will remember and appreciate for generations.

Thank you very much, Mr. President. And I believe that we should keep our eye on the ball and make sure that the mission is accomplished and we build an Iraq which is stable, at peace with itself and with its neighbor, and forever, I hope, a reliable ally of the United States.

President Bush. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:40 p.m. in the Oval Office at the White House.

Statement on Senate Filibuster of PATRIOT Act Reauthorization Legislation
December 16, 2005

The PATRIOT Act has protected American liberty and saved American lives since the law's passage after the attacks of September 11, 2001. Today, a minority of Senators filibustered to block the Senate from voting to reauthorize key provisions of the act. These Senators need to understand that the PATRIOT Act expires in 15 days, but the terrorist threat to America will not expire on that schedule. The terrorists want to attack America again and kill the innocent and inflict even greater damage than they did on September 11th, and the Congress has a responsibility not to take away this vital tool that law enforcement and intelligence officials have used to protect the American people. The Senators who are filibustering the PATRIOT Act must stop their delaying tactics so that we are not without this critical law for even a single moment.

Statement on Congressional Passage of Legislation To Help the Gulf Coast Rebuild Following Hurricanes Rita and Katrina
December 16, 2005

I commend the Congress for passing an important part of my comprehensive plan to help the citizens of the gulf coast rebuild their lives and their livelihoods. The private sector is critical in the rebuilding effort, and these tax incentives will help boost investment, get people back to work, and return the region to prosperity. Americans will continue to stand with our fellow citizens in the gulf coast region. I look forward to signing this bill into law.

Statement on House of Representatives Passage of Immigration Reform Legislation
December 16, 2005

I applaud the House for passing a strong immigration reform bill. America is a nation built on the rule of law, and this bill will help us protect our borders and crack down on illegal entry into the United States. Securing our borders is essential to securing the homeland. I urge the Senate to take action on immigration reform so that I can sign a good bill into law.

Memorandum on Guidelines and Requirements in Support of the Information Sharing Environment
December 16, 2005

Memorandum for the Heads of Executive Departments and Agencies

Subject: Guidelines and Requirements in Support of the Information Sharing Environment

Ensuring the appropriate access to, and the sharing, integration, and use of, information by Federal, State, local, and tribal agencies with counterterrorism responsibilities, and, as appropriate, private sector entities, while protecting the information privacy and other legal rights of Americans, remains a high priority for the United States and a necessity for winning the war on terror. Consistent with section 1016 of the Intelligence Reform and Terrorism Prevention Act of 2004 (Public Law 108–458) (IRTPA), my Administration is working to create an Information Sharing Environment (ISE) to facilitate the sharing of terrorism information (as defined in Executive Order 13388 of October 25, 2005).

Section 1016 of IRTPA supplements section 892 of the Homeland Security Act of 2002 (Public Law 107–296), Executive Order 13311 of July 29, 2003, and other Presidential guidance, which address various aspects of information access. On April 15, 2005, consistent with section 1016(f) of IRTPA, I designated the program manager (PM) responsible for information sharing across the Federal Government. On June 2, 2005, my memorandum entitled "Strengthening Information Sharing, Access, and Integration—Organizational, Management, and Policy Development Structures for Creating the Terrorism Information Sharing Environment" directed that the PM and his office be part of the Office of the Director of National Intelligence (DNI), and that the DNI exercise authority, direction, and control over the PM and ensure that the PM carries out his responsibilities under IRTPA. On October 25, 2005, I issued Executive Order 13388 to facilitate the work of the PM and the expeditious establishment of the ISE and restructure the Information Sharing Council (ISC), which provides advice concerning and assists in the establishment, implementation, and maintenance of the ISE.

On June 2, 2005, I also established the Information Sharing Policy Coordination Committee (ISPCC), which is chaired jointly by the Homeland Security Council (HSC) and the National Security Council (NSC), and which has the responsibilities set forth in section D of Homeland Security Presidential Directive–1 and other relevant presidential guidance with respect to information sharing. The ISPCC is the main day-to-day forum for interagency coordination of information sharing policy, including the resolution of issues raised by the PM, and provides policy analysis and recommendations for consideration by the more senior committees of the HSC and NSC systems and ensures timely responses.

Section 1016(d) of IRTPA calls for leveraging all ongoing efforts consistent with establishing the ISE, the issuance of guidelines for acquiring, accessing, sharing, and using information in support of the ISE and for protecting privacy and civil liberties in the development of the ISE, and the promotion of a culture of information sharing. Consistent with the Constitution and the laws of the United States, including section 103 of the National Security Act of 1947, as amended, and sections 1016 and 1018 of IRTPA, I hereby direct as follows:

1. *Leveraging Ongoing Information Sharing Efforts in the Development of the ISE.* The ISE shall build upon existing Federal Government policies, standards, procedures, programs, systems, and architectures

(collectively "resources") used for the sharing and integration of and access to terrorism information, and shall leverage those resources to the maximum extent practicable, with the objective of establishing a decentralized, comprehensive, and coordinated environment for the sharing and integration of such information.

a. The DNI shall direct the PM to conduct and complete, within 90 days after the date of this memorandum, in consultation with the ISC, a comprehensive evaluation of existing resources pertaining to terrorism information sharing employed by individual or multiple executive departments and agencies. Such evaluation shall assess such resources for their utility and integrative potential in furtherance of the establishment of the ISE and shall identify any unnecessary redundancies.

b. To ensure that the ISE supports the needs of executive departments and agencies with counterterrorism responsibilities, and consistent with section 1021 of IRTPA, the DNI shall direct the PM, jointly with the Director of the National Counterterrorism Center (NCTC), and in coordination with the heads of relevant executive departments and agencies, to review and identify the respective missions, roles, and responsibilities of such executive departments and agencies, both as producers and users of terrorism information, relating to the acquisition, access, retention, production, use, management, and sharing of terrorism information. The findings shall be reviewed through the interagency policy coordination process, and any recommendations for the further definition, reconciliation, or alteration of such missions, roles, and responsibilities shall be submitted, within 180 days after the date of this memorandum, by the DNI to the President for approval through the Assistant to the President for Homeland Security and Counterterrorism (APHS–CT) and the Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs (APNSA). This effort shall be coordinated as appropriate with the tasks assigned under the Guidelines set forth in section 2 of this memorandum.

c. Upon the submission of findings as directed in the preceding paragraph (1(b)), the DNI shall direct the PM, in consultation with the ISC, to develop, in a manner consistent with applicable law, the policies, procedures, and architectures needed to create the ISE, which shall support the counterterrorism missions, roles, and responsibilities of executive departments and agencies. These policies, procedures, and architectures shall be reviewed through the interagency policy coordination process, and shall be submitted, within 180 days after the submission of findings as directed in the preceding paragraph (1(b)), by the DNI to the President for approval through the APHS–CT and the APNSA.

2. *Information Sharing Guidelines*. Consistent with section 1016(d) of IRTPA, I hereby issue the following guidelines and related requirements, the implementation of which shall be conducted in consultation with, and with support from, the PM as directed by the DNI:

a. *Guideline 1—Define Common Standards for How Information is Acquired, Accessed, Shared, and Used Within the ISE*

The ISE must, to the extent possible, be supported by common standards that maximize the acquisition, access, retention, production, use, management, and sharing of terrorism information within the ISE consistent with the protection of intelligence, law enforcement, protective, and military sources, methods, and activities.

Consistent with Executive Order 13388 and IRTPA, the DNI, in coordination

with the Secretaries of State, Defense, and Homeland Security, and the Attorney General, shall develop and issue, within 90 days after the date of this memorandum, common standards (i) for preparing terrorism information for maximum distribution and access, (ii) to enable the acquisition, access, retention, production, use, management, and sharing of terrorism information within the ISE while safeguarding such information and protecting sources and methods from unauthorized use or disclosure, (iii) for implementing legal requirements relating to the handling of specific types of information, and (iv) that include the appropriate method for the Government-wide adoption and implementation of such standards. Such standards shall accommodate and reflect the sharing of terrorism information, as appropriate, with State, local, and tribal governments, law enforcement agencies, and the private sector. Within 90 days after the issuance of such standards, the Secretary of Homeland Security and the Attorney General shall jointly disseminate such standards for use by State, local, and tribal governments, law enforcement agencies, and the private sector, on a mandatory basis where possible and a voluntary basis where not. The DNI may amend the common standards from time to time as appropriate through the same process by which the DNI issued them.

b. *Guideline 2—Develop a Common Framework for the Sharing of Information Between and Among Executive Departments and Agencies and State, Local, and Tribal Governments, Law Enforcement Agencies, and the Private Sector*

Recognizing that the war on terror must be a national effort, State, local, and tribal governments, law enforcement agencies, and the private sector must have the opportunity to participate as full partners in the ISE, to the extent consistent with applicable laws and executive orders and directives, the protection of national security, and the protection of the information privacy rights and other legal rights of Americans.

Within 180 days after the date of this memorandum, the Secretary of Homeland Security and the Attorney General, in consultation with the Secretaries of State, Defense, and Health and Human Services, and the DNI, and consistent with the findings of the counterterrorism missions, roles, and responsibilities review under section 1 of this memorandum, shall:

(i) perform a comprehensive review of the authorities and responsibilities of executive departments and agencies regarding information sharing with State, local, and tribal governments, law enforcement agencies, and the private sector; and

(ii) submit to the President for approval, through the APHS–CT and the APNSA, a recommended framework to govern the roles and responsibilities of executive departments and agencies pertaining to the acquisition, access, retention, production, use, management, and sharing of homeland security information, law enforcement information, and terrorism information between and among such departments and agencies and State, local, and tribal governments, law enforcement agencies, and private sector entities.

c. *Guideline 3—Standardize Procedures for Sensitive But Unclassified Information*

To promote and enhance the effective and efficient acquisition, access, retention, production, use, management, and sharing of Sensitive But Unclassified (SBU) information, including homeland security information, law enforcement information, and terrorism information, procedures and standards

for designating, marking, and handling SBU information (collectively "SBU procedures") must be standardized across the Federal Government. SBU procedures must promote appropriate and consistent safeguarding of the information and must be appropriately shared with, and accommodate and reflect the imperative for timely and accurate dissemination of terrorism information to, State, local, and tribal governments, law enforcement agencies, and private sector entities. This effort must be consistent with Executive Orders 13311 and 13388, section 892 of the Homeland Security Act of 2002, section 1016 of IRTPA, section 102A of the National Security Act of 1947, the Freedom of Information Act, the Privacy Act of 1974, and other applicable laws and executive orders and directives.

(i) Within 90 days after the date of this memorandum, each executive department and agency will conduct an inventory of its SBU procedures, determine the underlying authority for each entry in the inventory, and provide an assessment of the effectiveness of its existing SBU procedures. The results of each inventory shall be reported to the DNI, who shall provide the compiled results to the Secretary of Homeland Security and the Attorney General.

(ii) Within 90 days after receiving the compiled results of the inventories required under the preceding paragraph (i), the Secretary of Homeland Security and the Attorney General, in coordination with the Secretaries of State, Defense, and Energy, and the DNI, shall submit to the President for approval recommendations for the standardization of SBU procedures for homeland security information, law enforcement information, and terrorism information in the manner described in paragraph (iv) below.

(iii) Within 1 year after the date of this memorandum, the DNI, in coordination with the Secretaries of State, the Treasury, Defense, Commerce, Energy, Homeland Security, Health and Human Services, and the Attorney General, and in consultation with all other heads of relevant executive departments and agencies, shall submit to the President for approval recommendations for the standardization of SBU procedures for all types of information not addressed by the preceding paragraph (ii) in the manner described in paragraph (iv) below.

(iv) All recommendations required to be submitted to the President under this Guideline shall be submitted through the Director of the Office of Management and Budget (OMB), the APHS–CT, and the APNSA, as a report that contains the following:

(A) recommendations for government-wide policies and procedures to standardize SBU procedures;

(B) recommendations, as appropriate, for legislative, policy, regulatory, and administrative changes; and

(C) an assessment by each department and agency participating in the SBU procedures review process of the costs and budgetary considerations for all proposed changes to marking conventions, handling caveats, and other procedures pertaining to SBU information.

(v) Upon the approval by the President of the recommendations submitted under this Guideline, heads of executive departments and agencies shall ensure on an ongoing basis that such recommendations are fully implemented in such department or agency, as applicable. The DNI shall direct the PM to support executive departments and agencies in such implementation, as

well as in the development of relevant guidance and training programs for the standardized SBU procedures.

d. *Guideline 4—Facilitate Information Sharing Between Executive Departments and Agencies and Foreign Partners*

The ISE must support and facilitate appropriate terrorism information sharing between executive departments and agencies and foreign partners and allies. To that end, policies and procedures to facilitate such informational access and exchange, including those relating to the handling of information received from foreign governments, must be established consistent with applicable laws and executive orders and directives.

Within 180 days after the date of this memorandum, the Secretary of State, in coordination with the Secretaries of Defense, the Treasury, Commerce, and Homeland Security, the Attorney General, and the DNI, shall review existing authorities and submit to the President for approval, through the APHS–CT and the APNSA, recommendations for appropriate legislative, administrative, and policy changes to facilitate the sharing of terrorism information with foreign partners and allies, except for those activities conducted pursuant to sections 102A(k), 104A(f), and 119(f)(1)(E) of the National Security Act of 1947.

e. *Guideline 5—Protect the Information Privacy Rights and Other Legal Rights of Americans*

As recognized in Executive Order 13353 of August 27, 2004, the Federal Government has a solemn obligation, and must continue fully, to protect the legal rights of all Americans in the effective performance of national security and homeland security functions. Accordingly, in the development and use of the ISE, the information privacy rights and other legal rights of Americans must be protected.

(i) Within 180 days after the date of this memorandum, the Attorney General and the DNI, in coordination with the heads of executive departments and agencies that possess or use intelligence or terrorism information, shall (A) conduct a review of current executive department and agency information sharing policies and procedures regarding the protection of information privacy and other legal rights of Americans, (B) develop guidelines designed to be implemented by executive departments and agencies to ensure that the information privacy and other legal rights of Americans are protected in the development and use of the ISE, including in the acquisition, access, use, and storage of personally identifiable information, and (C) submit such guidelines to the President for approval through the Director of OMB, the APHS–CT, and the APNSA. Such guidelines shall not be inconsistent with Executive Order 12333 and guidance issued pursuant to that order.

(ii) Each head of an executive department or agency that possesses or uses intelligence or terrorism information shall ensure on an ongoing basis that (A) appropriate personnel, structures, training, and technologies are in place to ensure that terrorism information is shared in a manner that protects the information privacy and other legal rights of Americans, and (B) upon approval by the President of the guidelines developed under the preceding subsection (i), such guidelines are fully implemented in such department or agency.

3. *Promoting a Culture of Information Sharing.* Heads of executive departments and agencies must actively work to create a culture of information sharing within their respective departments or agencies by assigning personnel and dedicating resources

to terrorism information sharing, by reducing disincentives to such sharing, and by holding their senior managers and officials accountable for improved and increased sharing of such information.

Accordingly, each head of an executive department or agency that possesses or uses intelligence or terrorism information shall:

a. within 90 days after the date of this memorandum, designate a senior official who possesses knowledge of the operational and policy aspects of information sharing to (i) provide accountability and oversight for terrorism information sharing within such department and agency, (ii) work with the PM, in consultation with the ISC, to develop high-level information sharing performance measures for the department or agency to be assessed no less than semiannually, and (iii) provide, through the department or agency head, an annual report to the DNI on best practices of and remaining barriers to optimal terrorism information sharing;

b. within 180 days after the date of this memorandum, develop and issue guidelines, provide training and incentives, and hold relevant personnel accountable for the improved and increased sharing of terrorism information. Such guidelines and training shall seek to reduce obstructions to sharing, consistent with applicable laws and regulations. Accountability efforts shall include the requirement to add a performance evaluation element on information sharing to employees' annual Performance Appraisal Review, as appropriate, and shall focus on the sharing of information that supports the mission of the recipient of the information; and

c. bring to the attention of the Attorney General and the DNI, on an ongoing basis, any restriction contained in a rule, regulation, executive order or directive that significantly impedes the sharing of terrorism information and that such department or agency head believes is not required by applicable laws or to protect the information privacy rights and other legal rights of Americans. The Attorney General and the DNI shall review such restriction and jointly submit any recommendations for changes to such restriction to the APHS–CT and the APNSA for further review.

4. Heads of executive departments and agencies shall, to the extent permitted by law and subject to the availability of appropriations, provide assistance and information to the DNI and the PM in the implementation of this memorandum.

5. This memorandum:

a. shall be implemented in a manner consistent with applicable laws, including Federal laws protecting the information privacy rights and other legal rights of Americans, and subject to the availability of appropriations;

b. shall be implemented in a manner consistent with the statutory authority of the principal officers of executive departments and agencies as heads of their respective departments or agencies;

c. shall not be construed to impair or otherwise affect the functions of the Director of the Office of Management and Budget relating to budget, administrative, and legislative proposals; and

d. is intended only to improve the internal management of the Federal Government and is not intended to, and does not, create any rights or benefits, substantive or procedural, enforceable at law or in equity by a party against the United States, its departments, agencies, or entities, its officers, employees, or agencies, or any other person.

GEORGE W. BUSH

Message to the Congress on Guidelines and Requirements in Support of the Information Sharing Environment
December 16, 2005

To the Congress of the United States:

The robust and effective sharing of terrorism information is vital to protecting Americans and the Homeland from terrorist attacks. To ensure that we succeed in this mission, my Administration is working to implement the Information Sharing Environment (ISE) called for by section 1016 of the Intelligence Reform and Terrorism Prevention Act of 2004 (IRTPA). The ISE is intended to enable the Federal Government and our State, local, tribal, and private sector partners to share appropriate information relating to terrorists, their threats, plans, networks, supporters, and capabilities while, at the same time, respecting the information privacy and other legal rights of all Americans.

Today, I issued a set of guidelines and requirements that represent a significant step in the establishment of the ISE. These guidelines and requirements, which are consistent with the provisions of section 1016(d) of IRTPA, are set forth in a memorandum to the heads of executive departments and agencies. The guidelines and requirements also address collateral issues that are essential to any meaningful progress on information sharing. In sum, these guidelines will:

- clarify roles and authorities across executive departments and agencies;
- implement common standards and architectures to further facilitate timely and effective information sharing;
- improve the Federal Government's terrorism information sharing relationships with State, local, and tribal governments, the private sector, and foreign allies;
- revamp antiquated classification and marking systems, as they relate to sensitive but unclassified information;
- ensure that information privacy and other legal rights of Americans are protected in the development and implementation of the ISE; and
- ensure that departments and agencies promote a culture of information sharing by assigning personnel and dedicating resources to terrorism information sharing.

The guidelines build on the strong commitment that my Administration and the Congress have already made to strengthening information sharing, as evidenced by Executive Orders 13311 of July 27, 2003, and 13388 of October 25, 2005, section 892 of the Homeland Security Act of 2002, the USA PATRIOT Act, and sections 1011 and 1016 of the IRTPA. While much work has been done by executive departments and agencies, more is required to fully develop and implement the ISE.

To lead this national effort, I designated the Program Manager (PM) responsible for information sharing across the Federal Government, and directed that the PM and his office be part of the Office of the Director of National Intelligence (DNI), and that the DNI exercise authority, direction, and control over the PM and ensure that the PM carries out his responsibilities under section 1016 of IRTPA. I fully support the efforts of the PM and the Information Sharing Council to transform our current capabilities into the desired ISE, and I have directed all heads of executive departments and agencies to support the PM and the DNI to meet our stated objectives.

Creating the ISE is a difficult and complex task that will require a sustained effort and strong partnership with the Congress. I know that you share my commitment to achieve the goal of providing decision makers and the men and women on the front lines in the War on Terror with the best

possible information to protect our Nation. I appreciate your support to date and look forward to working with you in the months ahead on this critical initiative.

GEORGE W. BUSH

The White House,

December 16, 2005.

The President's Radio Address
December 17, 2005

Good morning. As President, I took an oath to defend the Constitution, and I have no greater responsibility than to protect our people, our freedom, and our way of life. On September the 11th, 2001, our freedom and way of life came under attack by brutal enemies who killed nearly 3,000 innocent Americans. We're fighting these enemies across the world. Yet in this first war of the 21st century, one of the most critical battlefronts is the homefront. And since September the 11th, we've been on the offensive against the terrorists plotting within our borders.

One of the first actions we took to protect America after our Nation was attacked was to ask Congress to pass the PATRIOT Act. The PATRIOT Act tore down the legal and bureaucratic wall that kept law enforcement and intelligence authorities from sharing vital information about terrorist threats. And the PATRIOT Act allowed Federal investigators to pursue terrorists with tools they already used against other criminals. Congress passed this law with a large, bipartisan majority, including a vote of 98–1 in the United States Senate.

Since then, America's law enforcement personnel have used this critical law to prosecute terrorist operatives and supporters and to break up terrorist cells in New York, Oregon, Virginia, California, Texas, and Ohio. The PATRIOT Act has accomplished exactly what it was designed to do: It has protected American liberty and saved American lives.

Yet key provisions of this law are set to expire in 2 weeks. The terrorist threat to our country will not expire in 2 weeks. The terrorists want to attack America again and inflict even greater damage than they did on September the 11th. Congress has a responsibility to ensure that law enforcement and intelligence officials have the tools they need to protect the American people.

The House of Representatives passed reauthorization of the PATRIOT Act. Yet a minority of Senators filibustered to block the renewal of the PATRIOT Act when it came up for a vote yesterday. That decision is irresponsible, and it endangers the lives of our citizens. The Senators who are filibustering must stop their delaying tactics, and the Senate must vote to reauthorize the PATRIOT Act. In the war on terror, we cannot afford to be without this law for a single moment.

To fight the war on terror, I am using authority vested in me by Congress, including the Joint Authorization for Use of Military Force, which passed overwhelmingly in the first week after September the 11th. I'm also using constitutional authority vested in me as Commander in Chief.

In the weeks following the terrorist attacks on our Nation, I authorized the National Security Agency, consistent with U.S. law and the Constitution, to intercept the international communications of people with known links to Al Qaida and related terrorist organizations. Before we intercept these communications, the Government

must have information that establishes a clear link to these terrorist networks.

This is a highly classified program that is crucial to our national security. Its purpose is to detect and prevent terrorist attacks against the United States, our friends, and allies. Yesterday the existence of this secret program was revealed in media reports, after being improperly provided to news organizations. As a result, our enemies have learned information they should not have, and the unauthorized disclosure of this effort damages our national security and puts our citizens at risk. Revealing classified information is illegal, alerts our enemies, and endangers our country.

As the 9/11 Commission pointed out, it was clear that terrorists inside the United States were communicating with terrorists abroad before the September the 11th attacks, and the commission criticized our Nation's inability to uncover links between terrorists here at home and terrorists abroad. Two of the terrorist hijackers who flew a jet into the Pentagon, Nawaf al Hamzi and Khalid al Mihdhar, communicated while they were in the United States to other members of Al Qaida who were overseas. But we didn't know they were here until it was too late.

The authorization I gave the National Security Agency after September the 11th helped address that problem in a way that is fully consistent with my constitutional responsibilities and authorities. The activities I have authorized make it more likely that killers like these 9/11 hijackers will be identified and located in time. And the activities conducted under this authorization have helped detect and prevent possible terrorist attacks in the United States and abroad.

The activities I authorized are reviewed approximately every 45 days. Each review is based on a fresh intelligence assessment of terrorist threats to the continuity of our Government and the threat of catastrophic damage to our homeland. During each assessment, previous activities under the authorization are reviewed. The review includes approval by our Nation's top legal officials, including the Attorney General and the Counsel to the President. I have reauthorized this program more than 30 times since the September the 11th attacks, and I intend to do so for as long as our Nation faces a continuing threat from Al Qaida and related groups.

The NSA's activities under this authorization are thoroughly reviewed by the Justice Department and NSA's top legal officials, including NSA's General Counsel and Inspector General. Leaders in Congress have been briefed more than a dozen times on this authorization and the activities conducted under it. Intelligence officials involved in this activity also receive extensive training to ensure they perform their duties consistent with the letter and intent of the authorization.

This authorization is a vital tool in our war against the terrorists. It is critical to saving American lives. The American people expect me to do everything in my power under our laws and Constitution to protect them and their civil liberties. And that is exactly what I will continue to do, so long as I'm the President of the United States.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:06 a.m. from the Roosevelt Room at the White House. In his address, he referred to the National Commission on Terrorist Attacks Upon the United States (9/11 Commission). The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of this address.

Address to the Nation on Iraq and the War on Terror
December 18, 2005

Good evening. Three days ago, in large numbers, Iraqis went to the polls to choose their own leaders, a landmark day in the history of liberty. In the coming weeks, the ballots will be counted, a new Government formed, and a people who suffered in tyranny for so long will become full members of the free world.

This election will not mean the end of violence. But it is the beginning of something new, constitutional democracy at the heart of the Middle East. And this vote, 6,000 miles away, in a vital region of the world, means that America has an ally of growing strength in the fight against terror.

All who had a part in this achievement, Iraqis and Americans and our coalition partners, can be proud. Yet our work is not done. There is more testing and sacrifice before us. I know many Americans have questions about the cost and direction of this war. So tonight I want to talk to you about how far we have come in Iraq and the path that lies ahead.

From this office, nearly 3 years ago, I announced the start of military operations in Iraq. Our coalition confronted a regime that defied United Nations Security Council resolutions, violated a ceasefire agreement, sponsored terrorism, and possessed, we believed, weapons of mass destruction. After the swift fall of Baghdad, we found mass graves filled by a dictator. We found some capacity to restart programs to produce weapons of mass destruction, but we did not find those weapons.

It is true that Saddam Hussein had a history of pursuing and using weapons of mass destruction. It is true that he systematically concealed those programs and blocked the work of U.N. weapons inspectors. It is true that many nations believed that Saddam had weapons of mass destruction. But much of the intelligence turned out to be wrong. As your President, I am responsible for the decision to go into Iraq. Yet it was right to remove Saddam Hussein from power.

He was given an ultimatum, and he made his choice for war. And the result of that war was to rid a—the world of a murderous dictator who menaced his people, invaded his neighbors, and declared America to be his enemy. Saddam Hussein, captured and jailed, is still the same raging tyrant, only now without a throne. His power to harm a single man, woman, or child is gone forever, and the world is better for it.

Since the removal of Saddam, this war, like other wars in our history, has been difficult. The mission of American troops in urban raids and desert patrols, fighting Saddam loyalists and foreign terrorists, has brought danger and suffering and loss. This loss has caused sorrow for our whole Nation, and it has led some to ask if we are creating more problems than we're solving.

That is an important question, and the answer depends on your view of the war on terror. If you think the terrorists would become peaceful if only America would stop provoking them, then it might make sense to leave them alone.

This is not the threat I see. I see a global terrorist movement that exploits Islam in the service of radical political aims, a vision in which books are burned and women are oppressed and all dissent is crushed. Terrorist operatives conduct their campaign of murder with a set of declared and specific goals: to demoralize free nations, to drive us out of the Middle East, to spread an empire of fear across that region, and to wage a perpetual war against America and our friends. These terrorists view the world as a giant battlefield, and they seek to attack us wherever they can. This has attracted Al Qaida to Iraq, where

they are attempting to frighten and intimidate America into a policy of retreat.

The terrorists do not merely object to American actions in Iraq and elsewhere; they object to our deepest values and our way of life. And if we were not fighting them in Iraq, in Afghanistan, in Southeast Asia, and in other places, the terrorists would not be peaceful citizens; they would be on the offense and headed our way.

September the 11th, 2001, required us to take every emerging threat to our country seriously, and it shattered the illusion that terrorists attack us only after we provoke them. On that day, we were not in Iraq; we were not in Afghanistan. But the terrorists attacked us anyway and killed nearly 3,000 men, women, and children in our own country. My conviction comes down to this: We do not create terrorism by fighting the terrorists; we invite terrorism by ignoring them. And we will defeat the terrorists by capturing and killing them abroad, removing their safe havens, and strengthening new allies like Iraq and Afghanistan in the fight we share.

The work in Iraq has been especially difficult—more difficult than we expected. Reconstruction efforts and the training of Iraqi security forces started more slowly than we hoped. We continue to see violence and suffering, caused by an enemy that is determined and brutal, unconstrained by conscience or the rules of war.

Some look at the challenges in Iraq and conclude that the war is lost and not worth another dime or another day. I don't believe that. Our military commanders do not believe that. Our troops in the field, who bear the burden and make the sacrifice, do not believe that America has lost. And not even the terrorists believe it. We know from their own communications that they feel a tightening noose and fear the rise of a democratic Iraq.

The terrorists will continue to have the coward's power to plant roadside bombs and recruit suicide bombers. And you will continue to see the grim results on the evening news. This proves that the war is difficult. It doesn't mean that we are losing. Behind the images of chaos that terrorists create for the cameras, we are making steady gains with a clear objective in view.

America, our coalition, and Iraqi leaders are working toward the same goal, a democratic Iraq that can defend itself, that will never again be a safe haven for terrorists, and that will serve as a model of freedom for the Middle East.

We've put in place a strategy to achieve this goal, a strategy I've been discussing in detail over the last few weeks. This plan has three critical elements.

First, our coalition will remain on the offense, finding and clearing out the enemy, transferring control of more territory to Iraqi units, and building up the Iraqi security forces so they can increasingly lead the fight. At this time last year, there were only a handful of Iraqi army and police battalions ready for combat. Now, there are more than 125 Iraqi combat battalions fighting the enemy, more than 50 are taking the lead, and we have transferred more than a dozen military bases to Iraqi control.

Second, we're helping the Iraqi Government establish the institutions of a unified and lasting democracy, in which all of Iraq's people are included and represented. Here also, the news is encouraging. Three days ago, more than 10 million Iraqis went to the polls, including many Sunni Iraqis who had boycotted national elections last January. Iraqis of every background are recognizing that democracy is the future of the country they love, and they want their voices heard. One Iraqi, after dipping his finger in the purple ink as he cast his ballot, stuck his finger in the air and said, "This is a thorn in the eyes of the terrorists." Another voter was asked, "Are you Sunni or Shi'a?" And he responded, "I am Iraqi."

Third, after a number of setbacks, our coalition is moving forward with a reconstruction plan to revive Iraq's economy and

infrastructure and to give Iraqis confidence that a free life will be a better life. Today in Iraq, 7 in 10 Iraqis say their lives are going well, and nearly two-thirds expect things to improve even more in the year ahead. Despite the violence, Iraqis are optimistic, and that optimism is justified.

In all three aspects of our strategy, security, democracy, and reconstruction, we have learned from our experiences and fixed what has not worked. We will continue to listen to honest criticism and make every change that will help us complete the mission. Yet there is a difference between honest critics who recognize what is wrong and defeatists who refuse to see that anything is right.

Defeatism may have its partisan uses, but it is not justified by the facts. For every scene of destruction in Iraq, there are more scenes of rebuilding and hope. For every life lost, there are countless more lives reclaimed. And for every terrorist working to stop freedom in Iraq, there are many more Iraqis and Americans working to defeat them. My fellow citizens, not only can we win the war in Iraq, we are winning the war in Iraq.

It is also important for every American to understand the consequences of pulling out of Iraq before our work is done. We would abandon our Iraqi friends and signal to the world that America cannot be trusted to keep its word. We would undermine the morale of our troops by betraying the cause for which they have sacrificed. We would cause the tyrants in the Middle East to laugh at our failed resolve and tighten their repressive grip. We would hand Iraq over to enemies who have pledged to attack us, and the global terrorist movement would be emboldened and more dangerous than ever before. To retreat before victory would be an act of recklessness and dishonor, and I will not allow it.

We're approaching a new year, and there are certain things all Americans can expect to see. We will see more sacrifice from our military, their families, and the Iraqi people. We will see a concerted effort to improve Iraqi police forces and fight corruption. We will see the Iraqi military gaining strength and confidence and the democratic process moving forward. As these achievements come, it should require fewer American troops to accomplish our mission. I will make decisions on troop levels based on the progress we see on the ground and the advice of our military leaders, not based on artificial timetables set by politicians in Washington. Our forces in Iraq are on the road to victory, and that is the road that will take them home.

In the months ahead, all Americans will have a part in the success of this war. Members of Congress will need to provide resources for our military. Our men and women in uniform, who have done so much already, will continue their brave and urgent work. And tonight, I ask all of you listening to carefully consider the stakes of this war, to realize how far we have come and the good we are doing, and to have patience in this difficult, noble, and necessary cause.

I also want to speak to those of you who did not support my decision to send troops to Iraq. I have heard your disagreement, and I know how deeply it is felt. Yet now, there are only two options before our country, victory or defeat. And the need for victory is larger than any President or political party, because the security of our people is in the balance. I don't expect you to support everything I do, but tonight I have a request: Do not give in to despair, and do not give up on this fight for freedom.

Americans can expect some things of me as well. My most solemn responsibility is to protect our Nation, and that requires me to make some tough decisions. I see the consequences of those decisions when I meet wounded service men and women who cannot leave their hospital beds but summon the strength to look me in the eye and say they would do it all over again.

I see the consequences when I talk to parents who miss a child so much but tell me he loved being a soldier, he believed in his mission, and, "Mr. President, finish the job."

I know that some of my decisions have led to terrible loss, and not one of those decisions has been taken lightly. I know this war is controversial; yet being your President requires doing what I believe is right and accepting the consequences. And I have never been more certain that America's actions in Iraq are essential to the security of our citizens and will lay the foundation of peace for our children and grandchildren.

Next week, Americans will gather to celebrate Christmas and Hanukkah. Many families will be praying for loved ones spending this season far from home in Iraq, Afghanistan, and other dangerous places. Our Nation joins in those prayers. We pray for the safety and strength of our troops. We trust, with them, in a love that conquers all fear, in a light that reaches the darkest corners of the Earth. And we remember the words of the Christmas carol, written during the Civil War: "God is not dead, nor does He sleep; the Wrong shall fail, the Right prevail, with peace on Earth, good will to men."

Thank you, and good night.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:01 p.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. In his address, he referred to former President Saddam Hussein of Iraq. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of this address.

The President's News Conference
December 19, 2005

The President. Welcome. Please be seated. Thanks.

Last night I addressed the Nation about our strategy for victory in Iraq and the historic elections that took place in the country last week. In a nation that once lived by the whims of a brutal dictator, the Iraqi people now enjoy constitutionally protected freedoms, and their leaders now derive their powers from the consent of the governed. Millions of Iraqis are looking forward to a future with hope and optimism.

The Iraqi people still face many challenges. This is the first time the Iraqis are forming a Government under their new Constitution. The Iraqi Constitution requires a two-thirds vote of the Parliament for certain top officials, so the formation of the new Government will take time as Iraqis work to build consensus. And once the new Iraqi Government assumes office, Iraq's new leaders will face many important decisions on issues such as security and reconstruction, economic reform, and national unity. The work ahead will require the patience of the Iraqi people and the patience and support of America and our coalition partners.

As I said last night, this election does not mean the end of violence, but it is the beginning of something new, a constitutional democracy at the heart of the Middle East. And we will keep working toward our goal of a democratic Iraq that can govern itself, sustain itself, and defend itself.

Our mission in Iraq is critical to victory in the global war on terror. After our country was attacked on September the 11th and nearly 3,000 lives were lost, I vowed to do everything within my power to bring justice to those who were responsible. I also pledged to the American people to do everything within my power to prevent this from happening again. What we quickly

learned was that Al Qaida was not a conventional enemy. Some lived in our cities and communities and communicated from here in America to plot and plan with bin Laden's lieutenants in Afghanistan, Pakistan, and elsewhere. Then they boarded our airplanes and launched the worst attack on our country in our Nation's history.

This new threat required us to think and act differently. And as the 9/11 Commission pointed out, to prevent this from happening again, we need to connect the dots before the enemy attacks, not after. And we need to recognize that dealing with Al Qaida is not simply a matter of law enforcement; it requires defending the country against an enemy that declared war against the United States of America.

As President and Commander in Chief, I have the constitutional responsibility and the constitutional authority to protect our country. Article II of the Constitution gives me that responsibility and the authority necessary to fulfill it. And after September the 11th, the United States Congress also granted me additional authority to use military force against Al Qaida.

After September the 11th, one question my administration had to answer was how, using the authorities I have, how do we effectively detect enemies hiding in our midst and prevent them from striking us again? We know that a 2-minute phone conversation between somebody linked to Al Qaida here and an operative overseas could lead directly to the loss of thousands of lives. To save American lives, we must be able to act fast and to detect these conversations so we can prevent new attacks.

So, consistent with U.S. law and the Constitution, I authorized the interception of international communications of people with known links to Al Qaida and related terrorist organizations. This program is carefully reviewed approximately every 45 days to ensure it is being used properly. Leaders in the United States Congress have been briefed more than a dozen times on this program. And it has been effective in disrupting the enemy while safeguarding our civil liberties.

This program has targeted those with known links to Al Qaida. I've reauthorized this program more than 30 times since the September the 11th attacks, and I intend to do so for so long as our Nation is—for so long as the Nation faces the continuing threat of an enemy that wants to kill American citizens.

Another vital tool in the war on terror is the PATRIOT Act. After September the 11th, Congress acted quickly and responsibly by passing this law, which provides our law enforcement and intelligence community key tools to prevent attacks in our country. The PATRIOT Act tore down the legal and bureaucratic wall that kept law enforcement and intelligence authorities from sharing vital information about terrorist threats. It allows Federal investigators to pursue terrorists with tools already used against other types of criminals. America's law enforcement personnel have used this critical tool to prosecute terrorist operatives and their supporters and to breakup cells here in America.

Yet key provisions of this law are set to expire in 12 days. The House of Representatives voted for reauthorization, but last week, a minority of Senators filibustered the PATRIOT Act, blocking the Senate from voting to reauthorize key provisions of this vital law. In fact, the Senate Democratic leader boasted to a group of political supporters that the Senate Democrats had "killed the PATRIOT Act." Most of the Senators now filibustering the PATRIOT Act actually voted for it in 2001. These Senators need to explain why they thought the PATRIOT Act was a vital tool after the September the 11th attacks but now think it's no longer necessary.

The terrorists want to strike America again, and they hope to inflict even greater damage than they did on September the 11th. Congress has a responsibility to give our law enforcement and intelligence officials the tools they need to protect the

American people. The Senators who are filibustering the PATRIOT Act must stop their delaying tactics, and the Senate must vote to reauthorize the PATRIOT Act. In the war on terror, we cannot afford to be without this law for a single moment.

As we fight the war on terror, we'll also continue to work to build prosperity for our citizens. Because we cut taxes and restrained nonsecurity spending, our economy is strong, and it is getting stronger. We added 215,000 new jobs in November. We've added nearly 4.5 million new jobs since May of 2003. The unemployment rate is down to 5 percent, lower than the average of the 1970s, 1980s, and 1990s. Despite hurricanes and high gas prices, third-quarter growth was 4.3 percent. More Americans own their own homes than at any time in our history. Inflation is low. Productivity is high, and consumer confidence is up. We're heading into a new year with an economy that is the envy of the world, and we have every reason to be optimistic about our economic future.

We made other important progress this year on the priorities of American families. We passed a good energy bill, and we're putting America on the path to make our economy less dependent on foreign sources of oil. We were wise with taxpayers' money and cut nonsecurity discretionary spending below last year's level. We passed the Central American-Dominican Republic Free Trade Agreement to open up markets and help level the playing field for America's workers and farmers and small businesses. We passed bankruptcy reform and class-action lawsuit reform. I appointed John Roberts as the 17th Chief Justice of the United States. Chief Justice Roberts is poised to lead the Supreme Court with integrity and prudence for decades to come.

We've got more work to do in this coming year. To keep our economy growing, we need to keep taxes low and make the tax relief permanent. We must restrain Government spending, and I'm pleased that the House today has voted to rein in entitlement spending by $40 billion, and I urge the United States Senate to join them. We must reduce junk lawsuits and strengthen our education system and give more Americans the ability to obtain affordable health insurance. We must pass comprehensive immigration reform that protects our borders, strengthens enforcement, and creates a new temporary-worker program that relieves pressure on the border but rejects amnesty.

I look forward to the Senate holding an up-or-down vote on Judge Sam Alito and confirming him by January 20th as Associate Justice of the Supreme Court. Judge Alito has more prior judicial experience than any Supreme Court nominee in more than 70 years. He's a highly respected and principled jurist, and he will make our Nation proud as a member of the High Court.

As we prepare to spend time with our families this holiday season, we also stop to count our blessings. We're thankful for our courageous men and women in uniform who are spending the holidays away from loved ones, standing watch for liberty in distant lands. We give thanks for our military families who love and support them in their vital work and who also serve our country. And we pray for the families of the fallen heroes. We hold them in our hearts and we lift them up in our prayers and we pledge that the sacrifice of their loved ones will never be forgotten.

I'll be glad to answer some questions here, starting with you, Terry [Terence Hunt, Associated Press].

Investigation of Leaks/Judicial Safeguards on Wiretaps

Q. Thank you, sir. Are you going to order a leaks investigation into the disclosure of the NSA surveillance program? And why did you skip the basic safeguard of asking courts for permission for these intercepts?

The President. Let me start with the first question. There is a process that goes on inside the Justice Department about leaks,

and I presume that process is moving forward. My personal opinion is it was a shameful act for someone to disclose this very important program in a time of war. The fact that we're discussing this program is helping the enemy.

You've got to understand—and I hope the American people understand—there is still an enemy that would like to strike the United States of America, and they're very dangerous. And the discussion about how we try to find them will enable them to adjust. Now, I can understand you asking these questions, and if I were you, I'd be asking me these questions too. But it is a shameful act by somebody who has got secrets of the United States Government and feels like they need to disclose them publicly.

Let me give you an example about my concerns about letting the enemy know what may or may not be happening. In the late 1990s, our Government was following Usama bin Laden because he was using a certain type of telephone. And then the fact that we were following Usama bin Laden because he was using a certain type of telephone made it into the press as the result of a leak. And guess what happened? Saddam—Usama bin Laden changed his behavior. He began to change how he communicated.

We're at war, and we must protect America's secrets. And so the Justice Department, I presume, will proceed forward with a full investigation. I haven't ordered one, because I understand there's kind of a natural progression that will take place when this kind of leak emerges.

The second part of the question is? Sorry, I gave a long answer.

Q. It was, why did you skip the basic safeguards of asking courts for permission for the intercepts?

The President. First of all, I—right after September the 11th, I knew we were fighting a different kind of war. And so I asked people in my administration to analyze how best for me and our Government to do the job people expect us to do, which is to detect and prevent a possible attack. That's what the American people want. We looked at the possible scenarios. And the people responsible for helping us protect and defend came forth with the current program, because it enables us to move faster and quicker. And that's important. We've got to be fast on our feet, quick to detect and prevent.

We use FISA still—you're referring to the FISA court in your question—of course we use FISAs. But FISA is for long-term monitoring. What is needed in order to protect the American people is the ability to move quickly to detect.

Now, having suggested this idea, I then, obviously, went to the question, is it legal to do so? I am—I swore to uphold the laws. Do I have the legal authority to do this? And the answer is, absolutely. As I mentioned in my remarks, the legal authority is derived from the Constitution as well as the authorization of force by the United States Congress.

Adam [Adam Entous, Reuters].

Iraqi Elections and Constitution

Q. Mr. President, you have hailed the Iraqi elections as a success, but some lawmakers say you are not focusing on the threat of civil war. Do you fear a civil war? And how hard will you push Iraq's competing political parties to get a Government and a constitutional compromise?

The President. I appreciate that. We look at all contingencies, but my optimism about a unified Iraq moving forward was confirmed when over 10 million people went to the polls under a—and voted for a Government under the new Constitution. Constitutions tend to bind societies.

Now, there are some things we've got to watch, Adam, for certain. One, is we've got to help the Iraqi Government as best as they need help, to stand up a Government as quickly as possible. In other words, we're urging them: Don't delay; move as

quickly as you can; solve the—get the political parties—once the vote is completed, get the political parties together and come up with a Government.

And it's going to take awhile, because, first of all, the ballots won't be fully counted, I guess, until early January. And then, as I mentioned in my remarks, it takes a two-thirds vote to—first, to seat certain officials. Sometimes it's hard to achieve a two-thirds vote in legislative bodies. How about the Senate, for example? [*Laughter*] But nevertheless, it's going to take awhile. And the American people have got to understand that we think in terms of elections, most of our elections end the day after the election. Sometimes they don't, Adam. [*Laughter*] And so you're going to see a lot of give-and-take, and it's important for us to get this process moving forward.

Secondly, there is an opportunity to amend the Constitution. You remember that was part of the deal with the Iraqis in order to get this process moving. And we'll want to make sure we're monitoring and involved with that part. In other words, involvement doesn't mean telling the sovereign Government what to do. Involvement means giving advice as to how to move forward so a country becomes more unified. And I'm very optimistic about the way forward for the Iraqi people.

And the reason why is based upon the fact that the Iraqis have shown incredible courage. Think about what has happened in a brief period of time—relatively brief. I know with all the TV stations and stuff in America, 2½ years seems like an eternity. But in the march of history, it's not all that long. They have gone from tyranny to an amazing election last December. If I'd have stood up here a year ago, in one of my many press conferences, and told you that in the—"Next year I make this prediction to you: That over 10 million Iraqis, including many Sunnis, will vote for a permanent Government," I think you probably would have said, "There he goes again."

But it happened. And it happened because the Iraqis want to live in a free society. And what's important about this election is that Iraq will become an ally in the war on terror, and Iraq will serve as a beacon for what is possible, a beacon of freedom in a part of the world that is desperate for freedom and liberty. And as I say in my speeches, a free Iraq will serve as such an optimistic and hopeful example for reformers from Tehran to Damascus. And that's an important part of a strategy to help lay the foundation of peace for generations.

John [John Roberts, CBS News].

President's Decision on Iraq

Q. Thank you, Mr. President. So many questions, so little time.

The President. Well, keep your question short, then. [*Laughter*]

Q. I'll do my best, sir. But sir, you've shown a remarkable spirit of candor in the last couple of weeks in your conversation and speeches about Iraq. And I'm wondering if, in that spirit, I might ask you a question that you didn't seem to have an answer for the last time you were asked, and that is, what would you say is the biggest mistake you've made during your Presidency, and what have you learned from it?

The President. Answering Dickerson's [John Dickerson, TIME] question. No, I—the last time those questions were asked, I really felt like it was an attempt for me to say it was a mistake to go into Iraq. And it wasn't a mistake to go into Iraq. It was the right decision to make.

I think that, John, there's going to be a lot of analysis done on the decisions on the ground in Iraq. For example, I'm fully aware that some have said it was a mistake not to put enough troops there immediately—or more troops. I made my decision based upon the recommendations of Tommy Franks, and I still think it was the right decision to make. But history will judge.

I said the other day that a mistake was trying to train a civilian defense force and an Iraqi army at the same time but not giving the civilian defense force enough training and tools necessary to be able to battle a group of thugs and killers. And so we adjusted.

And the point I'm trying to make to the American people in this, as you said, candid dialog—I hope I've been candid all along, but in the candid dialog—is to say, we're constantly changing our tactics to meet the changing tactics of an enemy. And that's important for our citizens to understand.

Thank you. Kelly [Kelly Wallace, Cable News Network].

Open Dialog on Wiretaps

Q. Thank you, Mr. President. If you believe that present law needs to be faster, more agile, concerning the surveillance of conversations from someone in the United States to somewhere outside the country——

The President. Right.

Q. ——why, in the 4 years since 9/11, has your administration not sought to get changes in the law instead of bypassing it, as some of your critics have said?

The President. No, I appreciate that. First, I want to make clear to the people listening that this program is limited in nature to those that are known Al Qaida ties and/or affiliates. That's important. So it's a program that's limited, and you brought up something that I want to stress, and that is, is that these calls are not intercepted within the country. They are from outside the country to in the country or vice versa. So in other words, this is not a—if you're calling from Houston to L.A., that call is not monitored. And if there was ever any need to monitor, there would be a process to do that.

I think I've got the authority to move forward, Kelly. I mean, this is what it's—and the Attorney General was out briefing this morning and I—about why it's legal to make the decisions I'm making. I can fully understand why Members of Congress are expressing concerns about civil liberties. I know that. And it's—I share the same concerns. I want to make sure the American people understand, however, that we have an obligation to protect you, and we're doing that and, at the same time, protecting your civil liberties.

Secondly, an open debate about law would say to the enemy, "Here's what we're going to do." And this is an enemy which adjusts. We monitor this program carefully. We have consulted with Members of the Congress over a dozen times. We are constantly reviewing the program. Those of us who review the program have a duty to uphold the laws of the United States, and we take that duty very seriously.

Let's see here—Martha [Martha Raddatz, ABC News]—working my way around the electronic media, here.

Domestic Wiretaps

Q. Thank you, Mr. President. You say you have an obligation to protect us. Then why not monitor those calls between Houston and L.A.? If the threat is so great, and you use the same logic, why not monitor those calls? Americans thought they weren't being spied on in calls overseas—why not within the country, if the threat is so great?

The President. We will, under current law, if we have to. We will monitor those calls. And that's why there is a FISA law. We will apply for the right to do so. And there's a difference—let me finish—there is a difference between detecting, so we can prevent, and monitoring. And it's important to know the distinction between the two.

Q. But preventing is one thing, and you said the FISA laws essentially don't work because of the speed in monitoring calls overseas.

The President. I said we use the FISA courts to monitor calls. It's a very important tool, and we do use it. I just want to make sure we've got all tools at our disposal. This

is an enemy which is quick, and it's lethal. And sometimes we have to move very, very quickly. But if there is a need based upon evidence, we will take that evidence to a court in order to be able to monitor calls within the United States.

Who haven't I called on, let's see here. Suzanne [Suzanne Malveaux, Cable News Network].

Congressional Oversight

Q. Democrats have said that you have acted beyond the law and that you have even broken the law. There are some Republicans who are calling for congressional hearings and even an independent investigation. Are you willing to go before Members of Congress and explain this eavesdropping program? And do you support an independent investigation?

The President. We have been talking to Members of the United States Congress. We have met with them over 12 times. And it's important for them to be brought into this process. Again, I repeat, I understand people's concerns. But I also want to assure the American people that I am doing what you expect me to do, which is to safeguard civil liberties and, at the same time, protect the United States of America. And we've explained the authorities under which I'm making our decisions and will continue to do so.

Secondly, there is a committee—two committees on the Hill which are responsible, and that's the Intelligence Committee. Again, any public hearings on programs will say to the enemy, here's what they do; adjust. This is a war. Of course we consult with Congress and have been consulting with Congress and will continue to do so.

Wendell [Wendell Goler, FOX News Channel]. You got a little problem there, Wendell? [*Laughter*]

Intelligence on Weapons of Mass Destruction/Iraq

Q. I'm caught, Mr. President.

The President. Oh, you're caught. [*Laughter*] Well, liberate him. [*Laughter*]

Q. You've talked about your decision to go to war and the bad intelligence, and you've carefully separated the intelligence from the decision, saying that it was the right decision to go to war despite the problems with the intelligence, sir. But with respect, the intelligence helped you build public support for the war. And so I wonder if now, as you look back, if you look at that intelligence and feel that the intelligence and your use of it might bear some responsibility for the current divisions in the country over the war, and what can you do about it, sir?

The President. No, I appreciate that. First of all, I can understand why people were—well, wait a minute. Everybody thought there was weapons of mass destruction, and there weren't any. I felt the same way. We looked at the intelligence and felt certain that Saddam Hussein had weapons of mass destruction. Intelligence agencies around the world felt the same way, by the way. Members of the United States Congress looked at the National Intelligence Estimate—same intelligence estimate I looked at—and came to the same conclusion, Wendell.

So in other words, there was universal—there was a universal feeling that he had weapons of mass destruction. As a matter of fact, it was so universal that the United Nations Security Council passed numerous resolutions. And so when the weapons weren't there, like many Americans, I was concerned and wondered why. That's why we set up the Silberman-Robb Commission to address intelligence shortfalls, to hopefully see to it that this kind of situation didn't arise.

Now, having said all that, what we did find after the war was that Saddam Hussein had the desire to—or the liberation—Saddam had the desire to reconstitute his weapons programs. In other words, he had the capacity to reconstitute them. America

was still his enemy. And of course, he manipulated the Oil-for-Food Programme in the hopes of ending sanctions. In our view, he was just waiting for the world to turn its head, to look away, in order to reconstitute the programs. He was dangerous then. It's the right decision to have removed Saddam.

Now, the American people—I will continue to speak to the American people on this issue, to not only describe the decision-making process but also the way forward. I gave a speech prior to the liberation of Iraq, when I talked about a broader strategic objective, which is the establishment of democracy. And I've talked about democracy in Iraq. Certainly it's not the only rationale; I'm not claiming that. But I also want you to review that speech so that you get a sense for not only the desire to remove a threat, but also the desire to help establish democracy. And the amazing thing about—in Iraq, as a part of a broader strategy to help what I call, "lay the foundation of peace," democracies don't war; democracies are peaceful countries.

And what you're seeing now is an historic moment, because I believe democracies will spread. I believe when people get the taste for freedom or see a neighbor with a taste for freedom, they will demand the same thing, because I believe in the universality of freedom. I believe everybody has the desire to be free. I recognize some don't believe that, which basically condemns some to tyranny. I strongly believe that deep in everybody's soul is the desire to live in liberty, and if given a chance, they will choose that path. And it's not easy to do that. The other day, I gave a speech and talked about how our road to our Constitution, which got amended shortly after it was approved, was pretty bumpy. We tried the Articles of Confederation. It didn't work. There was a lot of, kind of, civil unrest. But nevertheless, in that—deep in the soul is the desire to live in liberty; people—make the—have got the patience and the steadfastness to achieve that objective. And that is what we're seeing in Iraq.

And it's not going to be easy. It's still going to be hard, because we're getting rid of decades of bitterness. If you're a—you know, you find these secret prisons where people have been tortured, that's unacceptable. And yet there are some who still want to have retribution against people who harmed them.

Now, I'll tell you an amazing story; at least I thought it was amazing. We had people—first-time voters, or voters in the Iraqi election, come in to see me in the Oval. They had just voted that day, and they came in. It was exciting to talk to people. And one person said, "How come you're giving Saddam Hussein a trial?" I said, "First of all, it's your Government, not ours." She said, "He doesn't deserve a trial. He deserves immediate death for what he did to my people." And it just struck me about how strongly she felt about the need to not have a rule of law, that there needed to be quick retribution, that he didn't deserve it. And I said to her, "Don't you see that the trial itself stands in such contrast to the tyrant that that in itself is a victory for freedom and a defeat for tyranny," just the trial alone. And it's important that there be rule of law.

My only point to you is there's a lot of work to get rid of the past, yet we're headed in the right direction. And it's an exciting moment in history.

Stretch [Richard Keil, Bloomberg News].

Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act

Q. Thank you, Mr. President. Getting back to the domestic spying issue for a moment. According to FISA's own records, it's received nearly 19,000 requests for wiretaps or search warrants since 1979, rejected just five of them. It also operates in secret, so security shouldn't be a concern, and it can be applied retroactively. Given such a powerful tool of law enforcement is at your disposal, sir, why did you see fit to sidetrack that process?

The President. We used the process to monitor. But also, this is a different era, a different war, Stretch. So what we're—people are changing phone numbers and phone calls, and they're moving quick. And we've got to be able to detect and prevent. I keep saying that, but this is a—it requires quick action.

And without revealing the operating details of our program, I just want to assure the American people that, one, I've got the authority to do this; two, it is a necessary part of my job to protect you; and three, we're guarding your civil liberties. And we're guarding the civil liberties by monitoring the program on a regular basis, by having the folks at NSA, the legal team, as well as the Inspector General, monitor the program, and we're briefing Congress. This is a part of our effort to protect the American people. The American people expect us to protect them and protect their civil liberties. I'm going to do that. That's my job, and I'm going to continue doing my job.

Let's see here—Sanger [David Sanger, New York Times].

Impact of Intelligence Failures/Iran

Q. Thank you, Mr. President. Following up on Wendell's question about the intelligence failures ahead of Iraq, one of the side effects appears to have been that the United States has lost some credibility with its allies when it goes to them with new intelligence. You, for example, your administration, has been sharing with some of your allies the contents of a laptop computer that was found in Iran concerning their nuclear program. Yet you are still having——

The President. Is that classified? [*Laughter*] No, never mind, Sanger.

Q. Yet you are still having some difficulty convincing people that Iran has a nuclear program. Can you tell us whether or not you think one of the side effects of the intelligence failure has been that it has limited your ability to deal with future threats like Iran, like North Korea, or any other future threats concerning terrorists?

The President. Sanger, I hate to admit it, but that's an excellent question. No question that the intelligence failure on weapons of mass destruction caused all intelligence services to have to step back and reevaluate the process of gathering and analyzing intelligence—no doubt about that. And so there's been a lot of work done to work with other intelligence agencies to share information about what went right and what went wrong, as well as to build credibility among all services.

I think, David, where it is going to be most difficult to make the case is in the public arena. People will say, "If we're trying to make the case on Iran, well, the intelligence failed in Iraq; therefore, how can we trust the intelligence in Iran?" And part of the reason why there needs to be a public message on this is because the first hope and the first step is a diplomatic effort to get the Iranians to comply with the demands of the free world. If they don't, there's—along the diplomatic path, there's always the United Nations Security Council. But that case of making—beginning to say to the Iranians, "There are consequences for not behaving," requires people to believe that the Iranian nuclear program is, to a certain extent, ongoing. And so we're working hard on that. I mean, it's no question that the credibility of intelligence is necessary for good diplomacy.

Q. Do you intend to make that case publicly too, sir? You haven't yet laid out the evidence on Iran——

The President. Well, I think that the best place to make the case now is still in the councils of government and convincing the EU–3, for example, to continue working the diplomatic angle. Of course, we want this to be solved diplomatically, and we want the Iranians to hear a unified voice. I think people believe that—I know this: People know that an Iran with the capacity to manufacture a nuclear weapon is not in the world's interest. That's universally

accepted. And that should be accepted universally, particularly after what the President recently said about the desire to annihilate, for example, an ally of the United States.

And so the idea of Iran having a nuclear weapon is—people say, "Well, we can't let that happen." The next step is to make sure that the world understands that the capacity to enrich uranium for a civilian program would lead to a weapons program. And so therefore, we cannot allow the Iranians to have the capacity to enrich. One of the reasons why I proposed working with the Russians, the Russian idea of allowing Iran to have a civilian nuclear powerplant industry without enriched material—in other words, the enriched materials—without enriching material, the enriching material would come from Russia, in this case, and be picked up by the Russians, was to prevent them from having the capacity to develop a nuclear weapon.

So I think there's universal agreement that we don't want them to have a weapon. And there is agreement that they should not be allowed to learn how to make a weapon. And beyond that, I think that's all I'm going to say.

But, appreciate it.

Baker [Peter Baker, Washington Post].

War on Terror and Safeguarding Civil Liberties

Q. Thank you, Mr. President. I wonder if you can tell us today, sir, what, if any, limits you believe there are or should be on the powers of a President during a war, at wartime? And if the global war on terror is going to last for decades, as has been forecast, does that mean that we're going to see, therefore, a more or less permanent expansion of the unchecked power of the Executive in American society?

The President. First of all, I disagree with your assertion of "unchecked power."

Q. Well——

The President. Hold on for a second, please. There is the check of people being sworn to uphold the law, for starters. There is oversight. We're talking to Congress all the time, and on this program, to suggest there's unchecked power is not listening to what I'm telling you. I'm telling you, we have briefed the United States Congress on this program a dozen times.

This is an awesome responsibility, to make decisions on behalf of the American people, and I understand that, Peter. And we'll continue to work with the Congress, as well as people within our own administration, to constantly monitor programs such as the one I described to you, to make sure that we're protecting the civil liberties of the United States. To say "unchecked power" basically is ascribing some kind of dictatorial position to the President, which I strongly reject.

Q. What limits do you see, sir? What limits do you see broadening——

The President. I just described limits on this particular program, Peter. And that's what's important for the American people to understand. I am doing what you expect me to do and, at the same time, safeguarding the civil liberties of the country.

John [John McKinnon, Wall Street Journal].

President's Goals for 2006

Q. Thank you, sir. Looking ahead to this time next year, what are the top three or top five—take your pick—accomplishments that you hope to have achieved? And in particular, what is your best case scenario for troop levels in Iraq at this time next year?

The President. This is kind of like—this is the ultimate benchmark question. You're trying to not only get me to give benchmarks in Iraq but also benchmarks domestically.

I hope the world is more peaceful. I hope democracy continues to take root around the world. And I hope people are able to find jobs. The job base of this country is expanding, and we need to keep it that way. We want people working. I want

New Orleans and Mississippi to be better places. I appreciate very much the progress that Congress is making toward helping a vision of New Orleans rising up and the gulf coast of Mississippi being reconstructed. I think we can make good progress down there.

One of the key decisions our administration has made is to make sure that the levees are better than they were before Katrina, in New Orleans. That will help—people will have the confidence necessary to make investments and to take risk and to expand.

I appreciate the Congress, and I'm looking forward to the Senate confirming—affirming the U.S. Congress's decisions to fund the education or reimburse States for education. There's some good health care initiatives in the bill. We want to make sure that people don't get booted out of housing. We want to work carefully to make sure people understand that there are benefits or help available that—for them to find housing. We want to continue to move temporary housing on the gulf coast of Mississippi so people can get better—closer to their neighborhoods and get their homes rebuilt. We want to start helping Mayor Nagin get temporary housing near New Orleans so as this economy comes back, people will be able to find jobs.

I appreciate the fact that the Congress passed the GO Zone tax incentives in order to attract capital into the region. So one of my hopes is, is that people are able to find hope and optimism after the Katrina disaster down there, that people's lives get up and running again, that people see a brighter future. I've got a lot of hopes, and I'm looking forward to working with Congress to get those—to achieve some big goals.

Joe [Joseph Curl, Washington Times].

Q. [*Inaudible*]

The President. You see, I hope by now you've discovered something about me, that when I say we're not going to have artificial timetables of withdrawal, and/or, you know, trying to get me out on a limb on what the troop levels will look like—the answer to your question on troop levels is, it's conditions-based. We have an objective in Iraq, and as we meet those objectives, our commanders on the ground will determine the size of the troop levels.

Nice try—end of your try.

Joe.

Timetables and Terrorism

Q. Mr. President, you said last night that there were only two options in Iraq, withdrawal or victory. And you asked Americans, especially opponents of the war, to reject partisan politics. Do you really expect congressional Democrats to end their partisan warfare and embrace your war strategy? And what can you do about that to make that happen?

The President. Actually, I said that victory in Iraq is much larger than a person, a President, or a political party. And I've had some good visits with Senate and House Democrats about the way forward. They share the same concerns I share. You know, they want our troops out of Iraq as quickly as possible, but they don't want to do so without achieving a victory. These are good, solid Americans that agree that we must win for the sake of our security. And I'm interested in, Joe, their ideas and will continue to listen carefully to their ideas.

On the other hand, there are some in this country that believe, strongly believe, that we ought to get out now. And I just don't agree with them. It's a wrong strategy, and I'd like to tell you again why. One, it would dishearten the Iraqis. The Iraqis are making a great—showing great courage to setting up a democracy. And a democracy in Iraq—I know I've said this, and I'm going to keep saying it, because I want the American people to understand—a democracy in Iraq is vital in the long run to defeating terrorism. And the reason why is, is because democracy is hopeful and optimistic.

Secondly, it sends the wrong signal to our troops. We've got young men and women over there sacrificing. And all of a sudden, because of politics or some focus group or some poll, they stand up and say, "We're out of there." I can't think of anything more dispiriting than—to a kid risking his or her life than to see decisions made based upon politics.

Thirdly, it sends the wrong signal to the enemy. It just says, "Wait them out. They're soft. They don't have the courage to complete the mission. All we've got to do is continue to kill and get these images on the TV screens, and the Americans will leave." And all that will do is embolden these people. Now, I recognize there is a debate in the country, and I fully understand that, about the nature of the enemy. I hear people say, because we took action in Iraq, we stirred them up; they're dangerous. No, they were dangerous before we went into Iraq. That's what the American people have got to understand. That's why I took the decision I took on the NSA decision, because I understand how dangerous they are. And they want to hit us again.

Let me say something about the PATRIOT Act, if you don't mind. It is inexcusable for the United States Senate to let this PATRIOT Act expire. You know, there's an interesting debate in Washington, and you're part of it, that says, well, they didn't connect the dots prior to September the 11th—"they" being not only my administration but previous administrations. And I understand that debate. I'm not being critical of you bringing this issue up and discussing it, but there was a—you might remember, if you take a step back, people were pretty adamant about hauling people up to testify and wondering how come the dots weren't connected.

Well, the PATRIOT Act helps us connect the dots. And now the United States Senate is going to let this bill expire. Not the Senate—a minority of Senators. And I want Senators from New York or Los Angeles or Las Vegas to go home and explain why these cities are safer. It is inexcusable to say, on the one hand, connect the dots, and not give us a chance to do so. We've connected the dots—or trying to connect the dots with the NSA program. And again, I understand the press and Members of the United States Congress saying, "Are you sure you're safeguarding civil liberties?" That's a legitimate question and an important question. And today I hope I'll help answer that. But we're connecting dots as best as we possibly can.

I mentioned in my radio address—my live TV-radio address—that there was two killers in San Diego making phone calls prior to the September the 11th attacks. Had this program been in place then, it is more likely we would have been able to catch them. But they're making phone calls from the United States, overseas, talking about—who knows what they're talking about, but they ended up killing—being a part of the team that killed 3,000 Americans. And so—I forgot what got me on the subject, but nevertheless, I'm going to—we're doing the right thing.

April [April Ryan, American Urban Radio Networks].

Issues of Race

Q. Mr. President, in making the case for domestic spying, could you tell us about planned attacks on the U.S. that were thwarted through your domestic spying plan? And also, on the issue of race, since you brought up the issue of Katrina, 2005 gave us your defense of yourself on race, and some are still not sold on that. In 2006, what are you giving to the Nation on the issue of race, as we're looking to the renewal of the Voting Rights Act in 2007 and things of that nature?

The President. Yes, thanks. April, the fact that some in America believe that I am not concerned about race troubles me. One of the jobs of the President is to help people reconcile and to move forward and to unite. One of the most hurtful things I

can hear is, "Bush doesn't care about African Americans," for example. First of all, it's not true. And secondly, I believe that—obviously I've got to do a better job of communicating, I guess, to certain folks, because my job is to say to people, we're all equally American, and the American opportunity applies to you just as much as somebody else. And so I will continue to do my best, April, to reach out.

Now, you talked about—and we have an opportunity, by the way, in New Orleans, for example, to make sure the education system works, to make sure that we promote ownership. I think it is vitally important for ownership to extend to more than just a single community. I think the more African Americans own their own business, the better off America is. I feel strongly that if we can get people to own and manage their own retirement accounts, like personal accounts and Social Security, it makes society a better place. I want people to be able to say, "This is my asset." Heretofore, kind of asset accumulation may have been only a part of—a single—a part of—a segmented part of our strategy. We want assets being passed from one generation to the next. I take pride in this statistic, that more African Americans own a home, or more minorities own a home, now than ever before in our Nation's history, not just African Americans. That's positive.

I still want to make sure, though, that people understand that I care about them, and that my view of the future, a bright future, pertains to them as much as any other neighborhood.

Now, you've mentioned the Voting Rights Act. Congress needs to reauthorize it, and I'll sign it.

The other question was?

Q. Sir——

The President. You asked a multiple-part question.

Q. Yes, I did.

The President. Thank you for violating the multiple-part question rule.

Q. I didn't know there was a law on that. [*Laughter*]

The President. There's not a law. It's an Executive order. [*Laughter*] In this case, not monitored by the Congress—[*laughter*]—nor is there any administrative oversight. [*Laughter*]

Protecting Intelligence Sources and Methods

Q. Well, without breaking any laws, on to—back on domestic spying. Making the case for that, can you give us some example——

The President. Oh, I got you. Yes, sorry. No, I'm not going to talk about that, because it would help give the enemy notification and/or, perhaps, signal to them methods and uses and sources. And we're not going to do that, which is—it's really important for people to understand that the protection of sources and the protections of methods and how we use information to understand the nature of the enemy is secret. And the reason it's secret is because if it's not secret, the enemy knows about it, and if the enemy knows about it, adjusts.

And again, I want to repeat what I said about Usama bin Laden, the man who ordered the attack that killed 3,000 Americans. We were listening to him. He was using a type of cell phone or a type of phone, and we put it in the newspaper—somebody put it in the newspaper that this was the type of device he was using to communicate with his team, and he changed. I don't know how I can make the point more clear, that any time we give up—and this is before they attacked us, by the way—revealing sources, methods, and what we use the information for, simply says to the enemy, "Change."

Now, if you don't think there's an enemy out there, then I can understand why you ought to say, "Just tell us all you know." I happen to know there's an enemy there. And the enemy wants to attack us. That is why I hope you can feel my passion about the PATRIOT Act. It is inexcusable to say to the American people, "We're

going to be tough on terror but take away the very tools necessary to help fight these people." And by the way, the tools exist still to fight medical fraud, in some cases, or other—or drug dealers. But with the expiration of the PATRIOT Act, it prevents us from using them to fight the terrorists. Now, that is just unbelievable. And I'm going to continue talking about this issue and reminding the American people about the importance of the PATRIOT Act and how necessary it is for us in Washington, DC, to do our job to protect you.

Let's see, who else? Jackson—Action Jackson [David Jackson, USA Today]. Got him a new job and everything.

President's Leadership

Q. Thank you, sir. One of the things we've seen this year is the reduction in your approval ratings. And I know how you feel about polls, but it appears to be taking something out of your political clout, as evidenced by the PATRIOT Act vote. What do you attribute your lower polls to, and are you worried that independents are losing confidence in your leadership?

The President. David, my job is to confront big challenges and lead. And I fully understand, everybody is not going to agree with my decisions. But the President's job is to do what he thinks is right, and that's what I'm going to continue to do.

Secondly, if people want to play politics with the PATRIOT Act, it's—let me just put—it's not in the best interests of the country, David. And yesterday—or this morning, I spoke to the Speaker, who called me. He said, "Mr. President, we had a pretty good couple of days. Got your budget passed. Got the Katrina relief package going forward. We're supporting our troops. We've got the free trade"—we talked about passing CAFTA in the past. I mean, we've done a lot. And it's good for the country, by the way.

And so I'm just going to keep doing my job. Maybe you can keep focusing on all these focus groups and polls and all that business. My job is to lead, to keep telling the American people what I believe, work to bring people together to achieve a common objective, stand on principle, and that's the way I'm going to lead. I did so in 2005, and I'm going to do so in 2006.

Thank you all for coming. Happy holidays to you. Appreciate it.

NOTE: The President's news conference began at 10:32 a.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to former President Saddam Hussein of Iraq; Usama bin Laden, leader of the Al Qaida terrorist organization; President Mahmud Ahmadi-nejad of Iran; and Mayor C. Ray Nagin of New Orleans, LA. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of this news conference.

Remarks During Visit to a "Toys for Tots" Collection Center
December 19, 2005

The President. Two-hundred-eighty-nine-thousand toys so far, right——

Volunteer. So far.

The President. ——are being distributed from here to children throughout DC.

It's an interesting process. The toys are collected, the marines sort, the DC police distributes. Is that right?

Volunteer. Yes.

The President. Thanks for doing this. It's a great part of the compassion of our country. Now, I told our troops that, one, we're

a great military. We're great because of the men and women who serve. We're great because they're well trained. We're also great because they're decent people who care about a neighbor in need.

So Laura and I are thrilled to be here. Thank you all for your service.

Volunteer. Thank you.

Volunteer. No problem, sir.

The President. Okay, we're getting to work.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:18 p.m. at the Naval District Washington Anacostia Annex.

Statement on House of Representatives Action on the Legislative Agenda
December 19, 2005

I appreciate the House of Representatives for its work to meet key national priorities, including funding the war on terror, voting to renew provisions of the PATRIOT Act, assisting hurricane victims, reducing our dependence on foreign sources of oil, and preparing against the threat of an avian flu pandemic. I also applaud the House for being wise with taxpayer dollars and approving a significant reduction in spending on entitlements. I thank the Speaker and the House leaders, Chairman Nussle, and the chairmen of the authorizing committees for their leadership. I urge the Senate to send these bills to my desk promptly so that I can sign them into law.

Statement on the Inauguration of the Afghan National Assembly
December 19, 2005

I congratulate the Afghan people on the inauguration of the new Afghan national assembly. Today is another milestone in Afghanistan's historic transition to a stable and democratic state governed by the rule of law. A freely and fairly elected legislature plays a vital role in the life of a representative democracy. I applaud the members of the national assembly on their service to their country and support their efforts, with President Karzai and his Government, to improve the lives of the Afghan people.

Message on the Observance of Christmas 2005
December 19, 2005

"Behold, a virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and his name shall be called Emmanuel"—which means, God with us.

MATTHEW 1:23

More than 2,000 years ago, a virgin gave birth to a Son, and the God of heaven came to Earth. Mankind had received its Savior, and to those who had dwelled in darkness, the light of hope had come. Each Christmas, we celebrate that first coming

anew, and we rejoice in the knowledge that the God who came to Earth that night in Bethlehem is with us still and will remain with us forever.

Christmas is a season of hope and joy, a time to give thanks for the blessing of Christ's birth and for the blessings that surround us every day of the year. We have much to be thankful for in this country, and we have a responsibility to help those in need. Jesus calls us to help others, and acts of kindness toward the less fortunate fulfill the spirit of the Christmas season.

On Christmas, we pray for freedom, justice, and peace on Earth. We remember those who have made the ultimate sacrifice for our country and for our freedom, and we ask for God's blessing on their loved ones. We ask God to watch over all of our men and women in uniform. Many are serving in distant lands, helping to advance the cause of freedom and peace. Our entire Nation is grateful to them and prays for their safe return.

Laura and I send our best wishes for a blessed and merry Christmas.

GEORGE W. BUSH

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

Message on the Observance of Hanukkah 2005
December 19, 2005

I send greetings to all those celebrating Hanukkah, the festival of lights.

More than 2,000 years ago, the Jewish people led a revolt against oppressors who forbade them to pray, study the Torah, or observe their religious customs. Led by Judah Maccabee and fueled by their faith, their small army triumphed over tyranny. When they reclaimed the desecrated Temple and prepared it to be purified and rededicated, the holy oil that should have lasted only one day instead burned for eight days. During Hanukkah, Jews around the world honor this miracle by lighting the menorah, a symbol of hope shining through darkness.

As Jewish Americans prepare to light the Hanukkah candles this year, we give thanks for God's many blessings and His watch and care over our Nation. We remember our many military families and ask God's special blessing on those who have lost loved ones in freedom's cause. We are grateful for the courage and commitment of America's men and women in uniform and pray for their safety as they serve around the world to spread peace and liberty.

Laura and I send our best wishes for a joyful Hanukkah.

GEORGE W. BUSH

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

Message on the Observance of Kwanzaa 2005
December 19, 2005

I send greetings to those observing Kwanzaa.

African Americans and people around the world reflect on African heritage during

Kwanzaa. The seven days of this celebration emphasize the seven principles of Nguzo Saba—unity, self-determination, collective work and responsibility, cooperative economics, purpose, creativity, and faith. These values contribute to a culture of citizenship and compassion, and Kwanzaa activities help pass on African values and traditions to future generations.

As families and friends gather for Kwanzaa, Americans remember the many contributions African Americans have made to our country's character and celebrate the diversity that makes our Nation strong. May your commitment to family, faith, and community thrive during this holiday season and throughout the coming year.

Laura and I send our best wishes for a happy Kwanzaa.

GEORGE W. BUSH

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

Remarks at a Swearing-In Ceremony for John J. Danilovich as Chief Executive Officer of the Millennium Challenge Corporation

December 20, 2005

Thank you all. Thanks for the warm welcome. It's nice to be back here at the State Department. I'm glad to be with my friend, Condi Rice, who's doing a fabulous job as our Secretary of State. It's also good to be here with the Board and staff of the Millennium Challenge Corporation. And I'm proud to be here to congratulate the new Chief Executive Officer, Ambassador John Danilovich.

This is a vital program for our country and for my administration, and that's why I've come. The MCC is an integral part of our strategy to fight poverty and to encourage economic development. And leading this organization requires a combination of idealism and managerial skill and diplomatic savvy and economic expertise. John Danilovich has those qualities. That's why I picked him, and that's why he's going to be a great executive leading this important corporation.

I'm also proud to be standing up here with Irene, and I'm glad to be with his three children, J.C., Alice, and Alex, proud members of the Danilovich family. I appreciate Ambassador Negroponte being here today. Thank you, John. He's doing a fine job as the Director of National Intelligence. In order to defeat the enemy, we have got to have the best intelligence possible. Thanks for your leadership.

Deputy Secretary Bob Kimmitt of the Treasury is with us. I see my friend, Mosbacher, here, from OPIC. Thanks for coming, Rob. Members of the administration too numerous to mention are here, and I want to thank the ambassadors, members of the diplomatic corps, Your Excellencies, thanks for being here today.

America is founded on the belief that every life has dignity and every life has value, and we have long felt a special responsibility to help the less fortunate. For decades, our country sent aid to developing—to the developing world with the best of intentions, but we did not ask if we were getting the best of results. Too often, American aid was squandered by inept leaders, pocketed by corrupt officials, and swallowed up by rampant inflation. Without insisting on accountability in exchange for generosity, we were not serving the people of the developing countries, and we were not serving the American taxpayers.

And so my administration decided to do something about it. We decided to insist

upon results. Almost 2 years ago, we launched the Millennium Challenge Account as an entirely new way to provide aid. The MCA is based on clear principle: Countries that seek our aid must demonstrate a record of performance. I don't think that's too much to ask on behalf of the taxpayer, nor is it too much to demand on behalf of people living in the countries we're trying to help.

Specifically, countries seeking MCA assistance have got to show results in three key areas. They must govern justly; that makes sense. They must invest in their people; that's a wise use of money. And they must encourage economic freedom.

Poor countries that prove a commitment to these sound policies are eligible to apply for an MCC compact. That's an interesting word, "compact." It means we're working together. It means these countries have to design a proposal that will reduce national poverty and stimulate economic growth. We consider each proposal through a rigorous process—sometimes too slow and too rigorous—and then award compacts to countries with wise proposals that include a way to measure results. By requiring countries to create and implement their own strategies, they have a stake in their own success, and we're giving Americans reason to be confident as we spend their money.

The Millennium Challenge Account has the potential to transform the way the world delivers aid. So far, we have signed compacts with five nations and committed to deliver nearly a billion dollars in assistance. That money is making life-changing difference in some of the poorest countries in the world. In Madagascar, where 80 percent of the people live on less than $2 a day, the MCA compact is helping to modernize the national land registry, which will help secure property rights for more than 60,000 families. In Honduras and Nicaragua, MCA compacts are helping farmers improve their business plans to grow more profitable crops and to get the crops to the markets faster. In Georgia, where I visited last spring, an MCA compact is helping to rebuild a gas pipeline that will provide reliable heat and electricity for more than a million people. And in Cape Verde, off the Atlantic coast of Africa, an MCA compact is funding the construction of new roads and bridges that will connect some of the nation's key islands. These small nations are making big commitments, and America is proud to stand by their side.

We support people who fight corruption. We support people who invest in the health and education of their children. We support people who understand that economic freedom is the way to improve the lives of their citizens.

We have more to do to fight poverty. I believe central to our foreign policy must be, "To whom much is given, much is required." That's why we're leading the fight against HIV/AIDS. That's why we're feeding the hungry. And we're going to continue to help eradicate poverty around the world. John Danilovich is the right person to take on this part of our efforts to fight poverty. He knows how to set priorities. He knows how to solve problems. He knows how to cut through bureaucracy.

In his first 6 weeks on the job, he has taken steps to streamline the administration at the Corporation and to expedite the application process for eligible countries. John and the MCC Board will now consider the applications of nearly two dozen countries that were recently selected as eligible for compacts. Many of these countries have made good progress on their proposals. I've asked John to complete and sign several more compacts in the coming months.

It's a good program. Let's get it moving, and let's implement it for the sake of eliminating poverty around the world. The success of the MCA is reinforcing our belief that lifting nations out of poverty requires partnership, not paternalism. In the 21st century, America is willing to be a partner with every nation that works to advance the prosperity, equality, and liberty of its people.

This is a commitment I've carried across continents from the United Nations in New York to Europe, to South America, to Africa and Asia. It is a commitment I have urged leaders of other developed nations to adopt, by insisting on measurable results for their own foreign aid. It is a commitment that I urge the United States Congress to continue to support by funding our requests for MCC funding. And it is a commitment that I am honored to entrust to Ambassador John Danilovich as he becomes the second Chief Executive Officer of the Millennium Challenge Corporation.

Congratulations, John. Thanks for your willingness to serve.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:06 a.m. in the Benjamin Franklin Room at the U.S. State Department. In his remarks, he referred to Robert A. Mosbacher, Jr., president and chief executive officer, Overseas Private Investment Corporation (OPIC). The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of Ambassador Danilovich.

Remarks on Departure for the National Naval Medical Center in Bethesda, Maryland
December 21, 2005

Legislative Agenda

Thank you all. The Senate is debating two very important measures, and I urge the United States Senate to pass the defense appropriations bill. It is an important piece of legislation that provides necessary funding for our troops who are fighting in Afghanistan and in Iraq and who are serving our country around the world. It's an obligation of every Member of the United States Senate to provide necessary funding for our troops on the frontlines so that we can fight and win the war on terror.

And the second important piece of legislation is the PATRIOT Act. In order to protect America, the United States Senate must reauthorize the PATRIOT Act. The terrorists still want to hit us again. There is an enemy that lurks, a dangerous group of people that want to do harm to the American people, and we must have the tools necessary to protect the American people. The PATRIOT Act passed overwhelmingly shortly after the September the 11th attack. It has been an effective tool; it has worked.

And the same as we protected the American people using the PATRIOT Act, we've also protected their civil liberties. There is extensive oversight on this very important program. The PATRIOT Act tore down the wall between law enforcement and intelligence communities, which makes it easier to connect the dots before an attack. The PATRIOT Act also gave law enforcement tools to investigate terrorism that they have already got to investigate other types of crimes.

The PATRIOT Act is scheduled to expire at the end of this year. The terrorist threat is not going to expire at the end of this year. The House has voted to reauthorize the PATRIOT Act, and they left town, because they thought their—because their business is finished. The Senate is still debating this issue. A majority of the United States Senate supports reauthorization; a minority of Senators is filibustering and preventing the Senate from voting to renew the PATRIOT Act. The Senate Democratic leader recently boasted about killing the

PATRIOT Act. This obstruction is inexcusable. The Senators obstructing the PATRIOT Act need to understand that the expiration of this vital law will endanger America and will leave us in a weaker position in the fight against brutal killers. It's important that the Senate act quickly on these two bills.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:11 a.m. on the South Lawn at the White House. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of these remarks.

Remarks to Caregivers at the National Naval Medical Center
December 21, 2005

Thanks for such a warm welcome. Laura and I are thrilled to be back at this unbelievable facility—unbelievable because of the buildings and the technology that's used here and the equipment but, more importantly, because of the decency and compassion and skill of our healers that work for our country.

So first we want to thank you all for helping do a really important job. And that is to be able to say to our country, at any time anybody gets hurt anywhere, they're going to get the best medical care possible. And that's done right here at Bethesda, as well as Walter Reed. And so we're here to thank the nurses and the docs and the healers and the volunteers who help put the smile on the faces of those who have been hurt as well as their families.

One of the great blessings of our country is the fact that there are millions of compassionate souls who are willing to try to make somebody's life better.

I want to thank Admiral Robinson and Dr. Winkenwerder, Admiral Arthur. I want to thank General Kiley and Lieutenant General Peach Taylor, as well as Major General Farmer. And thank Tom Travis, as well—happens to be his birthday, by the way. [*Laughter*] His wife said, "You're birthday gift is to say hello to the President," not a really good gift. [*Laughter*] Anyway. [*Laughter*]

We're serving in an amazing time. I say, "We're serving," because we're serving together. It is a time when this Nation of ours is facing unbelievable challenges. There is an enemy that still lurks, that wants to bring harm to the American people. And we've got to do everything in our power to protect the American people; that is our solemn duty. There is a fantastic opportunity, as we defeat this enemy, to lay the foundation for peace for generations to come.

We have a great opportunity as a generation called to act, called to protect America, to seize the moment and defeat this ideology with freedom. You know, I like to tell people about how—"amazed" isn't the right word—but how stark this story I'm about to tell you is to me, what an amazing contrast it is about Japan.

You know, my dad, as an 18-year-older signed up—in the United States Navy, by the way. [*Applause*] There you go. And there were a lot of 18-year-old and 19-year-old and 20-year-old kids, and some older people, too—[*laughter*]—to fight against a sworn enemy which had attacked us.

Laura and I just got back from the Far East, and I sat down at the table with the Prime Minister of Japan, talking about how to keep the peace, talking about how to deal with North Korea, talking about how—and thanking him, by the way, for sending

troops to Iraq to help this young democracy develop. And it was that contrast between what 41 did and what 43 is doing—that would be my dad and me. [*Laughter*] To sit down with a dad—which we're going to do here over Christmas—who fought the Japanese, and his son is helping to keep the peace with the Japanese, something had to have happened.

And one of my predecessors, Harry Truman, recognized the power of freedom to transform an enemy into an ally; that's what happened. And so Japan adopted a Japanese-style democracy. And in that democracies don't fight each other, in that democracy is the best way to encourage a peaceful world, it's working.

And what we're seeing today is brave troops and committed citizens who are not only determined to chase down the killers and bring them to justice before they hurt us again, but understand that by spreading freedom and democracy, we're battling an ideology of darkness with an ideology of hope. And we're laying that foundation for peace for generations to come. The task at hand is one that requires determination and discipline and great faith in the ideals of human freedom and human liberty.

And so coming here today is a chance to not only thank you for being a part of this incredible team of healers but also, being a part of this historic moment. Someday, an American President will be sitting down with a duly elected leader of Iraq, working hard to keep the peace, and future generations of Americans will be saying, "Thank God this generation of America stood strong for what we believe."

And so on behalf of a grateful nation, thanks for doing your duty. Thanks for serving. Thanks for being an important part of this march for freedom, and thanks, most of all, for bringing comfort and aid and solace to those who have been hurt on the battlefield and their families.

We wish you a Merry Christmas and a blessed 2006. May God bless your work, and may God continue to bless the United States.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:34 a.m. In his remarks, he referred to Adm. Adam M. Robinson, USN, commander, National Naval Medical Center; Maj. Gen. Kenneth L. Farmer, Jr., USA, commanding general, North Atlantic Regional Medical Command and Walter Reed Army Medical Center; Brig. Gen. Thomas W. Travis, USAF, commander, 89th Medical Group, and his wife, Sally; and Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi of Japan.

Remarks on Signing the Gulf Opportunity Zone Act of 2005
December 21, 2005

Thanks for coming. In a few moments, I will sign the Gulf Opportunity Zone Act of 2005. This important bill will help the citizens of the gulf coast continue to put their lives back together and rebuild their communities in the wake of the devastating hurricanes that hit the region earlier this year.

I want to thank the Members of Congress who have joined us here, and those who haven't joined us here, for passing this important piece of legislation. I want to thank Trent Lott from Mississippi for being here. Trent Lott invited me one time to his home, right there on the gulf coast of Mississippi. It no longer exists. He knows firsthand what it means to live through one of these devastating storms, and I appreciate you, Senator, for being here.

I want to thank Congressmen Jim McCrery of Louisiana and Bill Jefferson of Louisiana. Both these Members have

worked very hard for the people of the great State of Louisiana with Congress to put a package together to help the people of Louisiana and Mississippi get back up on their feet.

I want to thank Max Baucus. He's not from the gulf coast area of America. He's from Montana, but he cares. He is ranking member of the Finance Committee, and it's kind for you to be here.

I want to thank members of my Cabinet who have joined us here today, Elaine Chao and Alphonso Jackson, Mike Chertoff.

And finally, I want to thank my friend Don Powell, who is the Federal Coordinator for the gulf coast rebuilding effort. His job is to represent the administration there as he interfaces with State and local officials. I want to thank you, Don, for taking on this assignment.

When I spoke to the Nation from Jackson Square in New Orleans, I said our job and our goal for the gulf coast was not just to survive but to thrive, and not just to cope but to overcome. And I meant it. And we're now implementing a comprehensive plan to help the people of the region recover and rebuild. We've helped a lot of people get temporary housing. We're now in the process of helping them to transition to permanent homes. Helping people find housing is going to be one of the really important challenges that we all face together in order to help these areas rebuild.

We're working to assist the school districts that have taken in students from the affected areas. There's a lot of school districts around our country that said, "We want to help. Let us educate the children of those who evacuated," and now we're helping to rebuild them.

We're also helping rebuild the schools in the affected regions. Last week, we announced our plan to strengthen the levee system in New Orleans. And in the last 24 hours, I extended full Federal coverage of the cost of debris removal for Louisiana and Mississippi. We want to get the debris out of the way. I can't imagine anything more discouraging then to continue to see the piles—and I mean, literally, piles—of debris. And the sooner we can get that debris removed and disposed of, the more hopeful people will become.

Today I'm going to sign the Gulf Opportunity Zone Act of 2005. It's a step forward to fulfill this country's commitment to help rebuild. It's going to help small businesses, is what it's going to do. For small businesses in the affected area, the GO Zone will double expensing for investments in new equipment from $100,000 to $200,000.

The bill also provides a 50-percent bonus depreciation, and that means tax relief for small businesses that—and businesses that purchase new equipment and build new structures. In other words, this tax act provides incentives for people to move forward. And as these businesses move forward, they're going to need to employ people. So this is a tax bill that has got employment consequences to it. This is going to help the entrepreneurs of Louisiana and Mississippi and Alabama. Entrepreneurship creates opportunity, which creates jobs.

This is just part of our plan to help the people get back to work. We've got to help workers get the skills they need. I just met with a group of concerned citizens from business and labor and education, all aspects of society. Again, I want to thank you all for being there. We're talking about how to help put together a strategy that takes advantage of the jobs that are going to be created down there to make sure there's a skill set match. We've got a lot of people that want to work, and yet they may not all be electricians or plumbers. And so one of the real challenges and opportunities we have is to match willing worker with jobs which will actually exist. And that's what we're talking about and strategizing about.

And again, I want to thank you all very much. This is the private sector and public sector working in close coordination. Don

Powell is going to help put together a strategy that will be, one, it's easy to understand; and two, that will have moments that we'll be able to measure whether or not we're making progress.

The GO Zone Act does a couple of other things. It increases funding for Hope Scholarships and lifetime learning credits for students attending colleges and graduate students in the—and graduate schools in the Gulf Opportunity Zone. It's going to make continuing education for workers more accessible and help support high school training that these gulf coast residents are going to need to fill the jobs which are actually going to be existing.

By the way, in a year from now, we're going to be talking about, "What are we going to do about all these jobs, and who's going to fill them?" As a matter of fact, there's a job shortage already down there. And again, I repeat to you, this provides a great opportunity to make sure that the folks in Mississippi and Louisiana who—can find work. And those are the folks we want to be first in line, by the way. If you're from New Orleans, Louisiana, we want you to be the first person to get the job. And what I'm telling you is we're going to work to make sure housing is available for you and that there's a training center or training program that will help you meet your—match your desire to work with the jobs which actually exist.

If you're from Mississippi, we want those new jobs to go to Mississippi residents, and we want to help the Mississippi community college, for example, to become a vital training center for the jobs which are going to be needed to help this important part of our country get back up on its feet.

The Senate passed a deficit reduction bill that's going to provide $2 billion to help States pay for critical medical care for those evacuees who need it. That's important. The defense appropriations bill that the Senate is now considering—and I hope passes—would help repair damaged transportation infrastructure and provide important Federal funding for New Orleans to rebuild the levees and correct any design and construction flaws of those levees. These bills are important for the future of the gulf coast.

DOD bill is really important, as the good Senator will tell you. This time of year, Americans, we give our thanks for the many blessings we have. We renew our commitment to help those who are in need. We are going to continue to work together to build a better future for the people of the gulf coast. And the bill I'm about to sign is going to make a difference. It's an important piece of legislation. It's part of our strategy to accomplish an important national goal, and that is a revitalized gulf coast and a New Orleans that is a shining example of what America can do when it puts its mind to something.

So again, thank you all for coming. Now, my honor to sign the bill.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:07 p.m. in Room 350 of the Dwight D. Eisenhower Executive Office Building. H.R. 4440, approved December 21, was assigned Public Law No. 109–135.

Statement on Senate Action To Reauthorize PATRIOT Act Reauthorization Legislation

December 21, 2005

I appreciate the Senate for working to keep the existing PATRIOT Act in law through next July, despite boasts last week by the Democratic leader that he had blocked the act. No one should be allowed

to block the PATRIOT Act to score political points, and I am grateful the Senate rejected that approach. The terrorists want to attack our country again and inflict even greater damage than they did on September 11, 2001. The PATRIOT Act is a vital tool for America in the war on terror. The act has torn down the wall between law enforcement and intelligence officials to help us connect the dots and prevent attacks. The work of Congress on the PATRIOT Act is not finished. The act will expire next summer, but the terrorist threat to America will not expire on that schedule. I look forward to continuing to work with Congress to reauthorize the PATRIOT Act.

Statement on Senate Passage of Legislation To Reduce Entitlement Spending
December 21, 2005

The Senate vote to reduce entitlement spending is a victory for taxpayers, fiscal restraint, and responsible budgeting, and it will help keep us on track to cut the deficit in half by 2009. I applaud the Republicans in the House and Senate who supported the legislation. This will be the first time in nearly a decade that Congress has reduced entitlement spending. This strong bill demonstrates our commitment to funding our Nation's priorities and ensuring that taxpayer money is spent wisely.

Remarks on Departure for Camp David, Maryland
December 22, 2005

I hope you all have a happy holiday. This has been a year of strong progress toward a freer, more peaceful world and a prosperous America. We had three sets of elections in Iraq. This is an amazing moment in the history of liberty. A new Parliament has been seated in Afghanistan. Our economy is strong and getting stronger. People are working. We've added 4.5 million new jobs since April of 2003. Productivity is up. Small businesses are flourishing. Homeownership is high. It's been a good year for the American people.

We've got a lot of work to do. Yesterday and during this past week, the Congress acted in a wise way with the taxpayers' money, fiscally responsible set of appropriations bills that were passed that funded important priorities, key priorities—to make sure our troops have what they need to do their job. The DOD bill did just that. Another key priority is to make sure the people in the gulf coast of our country get the help they need to help rebuild New Orleans and the Mississippi gulf coast. And there is a good deal of money available for those who suffered from Katrina and Rita.

It appears to me that the Congress understands we've got to keep the PATRIOT Act in place, that we're still under threat. There's still an enemy that wants to harm us, and they understand the PATRIOT Act is an important tool for those of us here in the executive branch to use to protect our fellow citizens. The Senate extended the PATRIOT Act by 6 months.

As we head into the holiday season, I do want to say to the families of those

who have got a loved one deployed overseas, we stand with you, and we pray with you for the safety of your loved one. We want to send our greetings to your loved one overseas and tell him how much we appreciate you serving for the cause of freedom and peace.

Anyway, I hope you all have a great holiday. Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:25 p.m. on the South Lawn at the White House. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Statement on Congressional Passage of Legislation Funding the Armed Forces for the War on Terror in Iraq, Afghanistan, and Elsewhere
December 22, 2005

I applaud the Congress for passing legislation to fund our troops who are fighting the war on terror in Iraq, Afghanistan, and elsewhere. This funding will help us continue to hunt down the terrorists, pursue our strategy for victory in Iraq, and make America more secure. I look forward to signing the bill into law.

Statement on Congressional Action To Reauthorize PATRIOT Act Reauthorization Legislation
December 22, 2005

I appreciate the strong commitment by the majority of the House and of the Senate to reauthorize the PATRIOT Act. The terrorists are determined to strike America again and inflict even greater damage than they did on September 11, 2001. The PATRIOT Act is essential to protecting the American people against the terrorists. The act tore down the wall between law enforcement and intelligence officials so that they can share information and work together to help prevent attacks. The Senate Democratic leader boasted last week that the Senate Democrats had "killed the PATRIOT Act." Our Nation's security must be above partisan politics. The PATRIOT Act has helped us disrupt terrorist plots and break up cells here in the United States. I will work closely with the House and Senate to make sure that we are not without this crucial law for even a day.

The President's Radio Address
December 24, 2005

Good morning. On this Christmas Eve, Laura and I send our best wishes to families across America as you gather in your homes to celebrate the holiday. Christmas is a time of joy and peace, and we hope the holiday season brings all of you happy reunions with families and friends and time to rest and reflect as you look forward to a new year.

At Christmas, we give thanks for the gift of the birth of Christ and for the blessings that surround us every day of the year. In this great and prosperous land, we have so much to be thankful for, and Christmas reminds us of our obligation to share these blessings with others. There are many among us who are hurting and require a helping hand. In the new year, I hope Americans will look for ways to volunteer your time and talents where they are needed most. By reaching out to a neighbor in need, we make our Nation a more just and compassionate place.

This Christmas, we remember our fellow citizens who suffered from the hurricanes and other disasters that struck our Nation this past year. We pray for their strength as they continue to recover and rebuild their lives and their communities.

During the holiday season and throughout the year, we think with pride of the men and women of our Armed Forces, who are keeping our Nation safe and defending freedom around the world. In Iraq, Afghanistan, and elsewhere, they are protecting our liberty by spreading liberty to others, and all Americans are grateful to our troops for their courage and commitment.

We're also grateful to their families. Staying behind when a family member goes to war is a heavy burden, and it's particularly hard at Christmas. We pray for our military families; we ask Almighty God to bestow His protection and care on their loved ones as they protect our Nation from grave dangers.

We also remember the heroic men and women who have made the ultimate sacrifice for our Nation's freedom. We pray that God will comfort the loved ones they left behind. The sacrifices of these brave troops have rescued millions from lives of tyranny and sorrow and made America more secure. We will always cherish the memory of each of our fallen service men and women and count it a privilege to be citizens of the country they served.

The times we live in have brought many challenges to our country. And at such times, the story of Christmas brings special comfort and confidence. Christmas reminds us that we can trust in God's promise of peace on Earth and good will toward men. On a night more than 2,000 years ago, an angel of the Lord brought good tidings of great joy: The God of Heaven had come to Earth, and He would be with us always.

Thank you for listening, and Merry Christmas.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 7:10 a.m. on December 22 in the Cabinet Room at the White House for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on December 24. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on December 23 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 Anniversary of the Earthquake and Tsunamis in the Indian Ocean

December 30, 2005

One year ago, an earthquake off the island of Sumatra caused a violent tsunami. The tsunami swept across the Indian Ocean and caused enormous destruction from Asia to the Horn of Africa. More than 200,000 men, women, and children lost their lives, and entire villages were destroyed. A year later, we remember those days of sorrow, and we also recall acts of courage and kindness as America and many other nations rallied to help those in need and provide urgent relief. Our Nation is proud of the

efforts and generosity of our armed services, relief professionals, volunteers, and all those who made contributions to the relief effort. We remain committed to helping the citizens of affected nations rebuild their economies, communities, and lives. At this time of remembrance, the thoughts and prayers of the American people are with those who suffered from this tragedy. May God comfort all those affected by the tsunami and give them strength in the years ahead.

Statement on Signing the Department of Defense, Emergency Supplemental Appropriations to Address Hurricanes in the Gulf of Mexico, and Pandemic Influenza Act, 2006

December 30, 2005

Today, I have signed into law H.R. 2863, the "Department of Defense, Emergency Supplemental Appropriations to Address Hurricanes in the Gulf of Mexico, and Pandemic Influenza Act, 2006." The Act provides resources needed to fight the war on terror, help citizens of the Gulf States recover from devastating hurricanes, and protect Americans from a potential influenza pandemic.

Sections 8007, 8011, and 8093 of the Act prohibit the use of funds to initiate a special access program, a new overseas installation, or a new start program, unless the congressional defense committees receive advance notice. The Supreme Court of the United States has stated that the President's authority to classify and control access to information bearing on the national security flows from the Constitution and does not depend upon a legislative grant of authority. Although the advance notice contemplated by sections 8007, 8011, and 8093 can be provided in most situations as a matter of comity, situations may arise, especially in wartime, in which the President must act promptly under his constitutional grants of executive power and authority as Commander in Chief of the Armed Forces while protecting certain extraordinarily sensitive national security information. The executive branch shall construe these sections in a manner consistent with the constitutional authority of the President.

Section 8059 of the Act provides that, notwithstanding any other provision of law, no funds available to the Department of Defense for fiscal year 2006 may be used to transfer defense articles or services, other than intelligence services, to another nation or an international organization for international peacekeeping, peace enforcement, or humanitarian assistance operations, until 15 days after the executive branch notifies six committees of the Congress of the planned transfer. To the extent that protection of the U.S. Armed Forces deployed for international peacekeeping, peace enforcement, or humanitarian assistance operations might require action of a kind covered by section 8059 sooner than 15 days after notification, the executive branch shall construe the section in a manner consistent with the President's constitutional authority as Commander in Chief.

A proviso in the Act's appropriation for "Operation and Maintenance, Defense-Wide" purports to prohibit planning for consolidation of certain offices within the Department of Defense. Also, sections 8010(b), 8032, 8037(b), and 8100 purport to specify the content of portions of future budget requests to the Congress. The executive branch shall construe these provisions relating to planning and making of budget recommendations in a manner consistent

with the President's constitutional authority to require the opinions of the heads of departments, to supervise the unitary executive branch, and to recommend for congressional consideration such measures as the President shall judge necessary and expedient.

Section 8005 of the Act, relating to requests to congressional committees for reprogramming of funds, shall be construed as calling solely for notification, as any other construction would be inconsistent with the constitutional principles enunciated by the Supreme Court of the United States in *INS v. Chadha*.

The executive branch shall construe section 8104, relating to integration of foreign intelligence information, in a manner consistent with the President's constitutional authority as Commander in Chief, including for the conduct of intelligence operations, and to supervise the unitary executive branch. Also, the executive branch shall construe sections 8106 and 8119 of the Act, which purport to prohibit the President from altering command and control relationships within the Armed Forces, as advisory, as any other construction would be inconsistent with the constitutional grant to the President of the authority of Commander in Chief.

The executive branch shall construe provisions of the Act relating to race, ethnicity, gender, and State residency, such as sections 8014, 8020 and 8057, in a manner consistent with the requirement to afford equal protection of the laws under the Due Process Clause of the Constitution's Fifth Amendment.

The executive branch shall construe Title X in Division A of the Act, relating to detainees, in a manner consistent with the constitutional authority of the President to supervise the unitary executive branch and as Commander in Chief and consistent with the constitutional limitations on the judicial power, which will assist in achieving the shared objective of the Congress and the President, evidenced in Title X, of protecting the American people from further terrorist attacks. Further, in light of the principles enunciated by the Supreme Court of the United States in 2001 in *Alexander v. Sandoval*, and noting that the text and structure of Title X do not create a private right of action to enforce Title X, the executive branch shall construe Title X not to create a private right of action. Finally, given the decision of the Congress reflected in subsections 1005(e) and 1005(h) that the amendments made to section 2241 of title 28, United States Code, shall apply to past, present, and future actions, including applications for writs of habeas corpus, described in that section, and noting that section 1005 does not confer any constitutional right upon an alien detained abroad as an enemy combatant, the executive branch shall construe section 1005 to preclude the Federal courts from exercising subject matter jurisdiction over any existing or future action, including applications for writs of habeas corpus, described in section 1005.

Language in Division B of the Act, under the heading "Office of Justice Programs, State and Local Law Enforcement Assistance," purports to require the Attorney General to consult congressional committees prior to allocating appropriations for expenditure to execute the law. Because the President's constitutional authority to supervise the unitary executive branch and take care that the laws be faithfully executed cannot be made by law subject to a requirement to consult with congressional committees or to involve them in executive decision-making, the executive branch shall construe the provision to require only notification. At the same time, the Attorney General shall, as a matter of comity between the executive and legislative branches, seek and consider the views of appropriate committees in this matter as the Attorney General deems appropriate.

Certain provisions in the Act purport to allocate funds for specified purposes as set forth in the joint explanatory statement of

managers that accompanied the Act or other Acts; to make changes in statements of managers that accompanied various appropriations bills reported from conferences in the past; or to direct compliance with a committee report. Such provisions include section 8044 in Division A, and sections 5022, 5023, and 5024 and language under the heading "Natural Resources Conservation Service, Conservation Operations" in Division B, of the Act. Other provisions of the Act, such as sections 8073 and 8082 in Division A, purport to give binding effect to legislative documents not presented to the President. The executive branch shall construe all these provisions in a manner consistent with the bicameral passage and presentment requirements of the Constitution for the making of a law.

GEORGE W. BUSH

The White House,
December 30, 2005.

NOTE: H.R. 2863, approved December 30, was assigned Public Law No. 109–148.

Statement on Signing the Departments of Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2006

December 30, 2005

Today, I have signed into law H.R. 3010, the "Departments of Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2006." This Act appropriates funds for key domestic programs, including programs to protect America's workers, help educate America's youth, and guard Americans against potential bioterrorism or epidemics.

The executive branch shall construe certain provisions of the Act that purport to require congressional committee approval for the execution of a law as calling solely for notification, as any other construction would be inconsistent with the constitutional principles enunciated by the Supreme Court of the United States in *INS v. Chadha*. These provisions include sections 103, 208, and language under the heading "Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation Fund."

The executive branch shall construe provisions in the Act that purport to mandate or regulate submission of information to the Congress in a manner consistent with the President's constitutional authority to withhold information that could impair foreign relations, national security, the deliberative processes of the Executive, or the performance of the Executive's constitutional duties. Such provisions include language under the heading "Department of Health and Human Services, Office of the Secretary, General Departmental Management."

Certain provisions of the Act relate to race, ethnicity, or gender. The executive branch shall construe such provisions in a manner consistent with the requirement that the Federal Government afford equal protection of the laws under the Due Process Clause of the Fifth Amendment to the Constitution.

GEORGE W. BUSH

The White House,
December 30, 2005.

NOTE: H.R. 3010, approved December 30, was assigned Public Law No. 109–149.

Message on the Observance of New Year's Day, 2006
December 30, 2005

The New Year is a time of hope as we reflect on the past and prepare for the future.

The great strength of our Nation lies in the hearts and souls of the American people. This past year, Americans responded with an outpouring of compassion to help the people of the Gulf Coast region recover from one of the most devastating natural disasters in our Nation's history. We remember the victims of the past year's hurricanes and give thanks for the millions of people who opened their hearts, homes, and communities to those in need.

In the past year, we continued our work to spread freedom and peace. In 2005, Iraqis three times exercised their right to vote in free elections, and the Afghan people conducted successful parliamentary elections. In the coming year, America will continue to stand beside these young democracies and lay the foundation of peace for our children and grandchildren.

We appreciate the brave men and women in uniform who protect our country and advance freedom around the world. We are grateful to their families for their support and sacrifice, and we pray for all those who have lost loved ones in freedom's cause. Our Nation will always remember the heroes who have given their lives to protect us all.

As we celebrate the New Year, we give thanks to God for His blessings and ask for His guidance. We look with hope to the year ahead and the many new opportunities the future will bring.

Laura and I send our best wishes for a happy New Year. May God bless you, and may God continue to bless America.

GEORGE W. BUSH

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

The President's Radio Address
December 31, 2005

Good morning. Two thousand five has been a year of strong progress toward a freer, more peaceful world and a more prosperous America. This year we watched the Iraqi people defy the terrorists and suicide bombers and hold three successful elections, voting to choose the only constitutional, democratic government in the Arab world. We also saw the people of Afghanistan elect a democratic Parliament in a nation that only a few years ago was ruled by the Taliban.

These are amazing achievements in the history of liberty. As freedom and democracy take hold in a troubled region, we are making the American people safer here at home and laying the foundation of peace for future generations.

The United States has a vital interest in the success of a free Iraq, so in the year ahead, we will continue to pursue the comprehensive strategy for victory that I have discussed with you in recent weeks. This strategy has security, political, and economic elements. First, our coalition is staying on the offense, finding and clearing the enemy out of Iraqi cities, towns, and villages, transferring more control to Iraqi units, and building up the Iraqi security forces so they can increasingly lead the

fight to secure their country. Second, we are helping Iraqis build the political institutions of an inclusive, unified, and lasting democracy. And third, our coalition is overcoming earlier setbacks and moving forward with a reconstruction plan to rebuild Iraq's economy and infrastructure. As we help Iraq build a peaceful and stable democracy, the United States will gain an ally in the war on terror, inspire reformers across the Middle East, and make the American people more secure.

During 2005, thanks to our tax relief, spending restraint, and the hard work of the American people, our economy remained the envy of the world. Our economy has been growing strongly for more than 2 years, and has added nearly 4½ million jobs since May of 2003. More Americans own their homes than at any time in our Nation's history. Inflation is low. Productivity is high, and small businesses are flourishing. Real disposable income is up. Consumers are confident, and early reports suggest good retail sales this holiday season.

To keep our economy moving forward, we must continue to pursue sound policies in Washington and be wise with taxpayers' money. We made real progress this year in restraining Government spending. Last February, I submitted to Congress the most disciplined budget proposal since Ronald Reagan was President. Working with the Congress, we ended or reduced about 90 lower priority or poorly performing Government programs, cut nonsecurity discretionary spending, and kept overall discretionary spending growth below the rate of inflation. We have now cut the rate of growth in nonsecurity discretionary spending each year I have been in office.

Before their holiday recess, both the House and the Senate also voted to cut mandatory spending by nearly $40 billion. This will be the first reduction of entitlement spending in nearly a decade. By being responsible with the taxpayers' money, we are funding our Nation's priorities, while staying on track to cut the deficit in half by 2009.

In the new year, we must also make permanent the tax relief that has kept our economy growing. We will work to expand free and fair trade, so America's farmers, workers, and businesses can enjoy the opportunities the global economy offers. We'll build on the progress we've made with this year's energy bill, so our Nation will be less dependent on foreign sources of energy. We will continue to promote an ownership society in which people have more control over their retirement and health care. We'll continue to improve education and job training programs, so our citizens have the skills necessary to compete and succeed in the 21st century. And we will show the compassionate heart of our Nation and provide the people of the gulf coast the help they need to rebuild after Hurricanes Katrina and Rita.

In 2005, America grew in prosperity, advanced the cause of freedom and peace, and enhanced our security. Our duties continue in the new year, and I'm confident that our Nation will meet the challenges that lie ahead.

Thank you for listening, and happy New Year.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 7:52 a.m. on December 30 in the Cabinet Room at the White House for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on December 31. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on December 30 but was embargoed for release until the broadcast. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of this address.

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Hakim, Abdul Aziz Al- —1917
Hale, David M.—1926, 1948
Hall, H. Dale—1910, 1943
Hall, John L.—1935
Hall, Ralph M.—1311
Halpern, James S.—1946
Hamilton, Lee H.—1851, 1932
Hamza al-Masri, Abu—1705
Hardberger, Phil—1483
Hardesty, David C., Jr.—1180
Harkness, Stephanie—1909
Harris, Ciara—1858
Harris, Julia Ann—1805, 1806
Hartman, Bill—1265, 1911
Hartman, Nina—1265, 1911
Hartsell, Carol—1810
Hartsell, Clair—1810
Hartsell, David—1810
Hartsell, Kirby—1810
Hartsell, Olivia—1810
Harvey, Francis J.—1478
Harvey, Lynne "Angel"—1692
Harvey, Mary—1586
Harvey, Paul—1692
Harvey, Thomas E.—1913
Hassani, Hajim al- —1840, 1925
Hastert, J. Dennis—1320–1322, 1888, 1889, 1932, 1933
Hastert, Jean—1320
Hatch, Orrin G.—1337, 1496
Hayworth, John D., Jr.—1771
Hazem, Tarek—1785
Heaton, Patricia H.—1942
Height, Dorothy I.—1800
Henke, Robert J.—1913, 1945
Henke, Tracy A.—1909, 1943
Henry, Emil W., Jr.—1913, 1945
Henry, Peter—1936
Herbert, Gary R.—1336
Herbert, Jeanette—1337
Herbold, Patricia L.—1909, 1943
Hereth, Larry L.—1472, 1491
Hering, Leendert R. "Len," Sr.—1374
Hernandez, Israel—1532
Hertell, Hans H.—1532
Heverly, Frances—1274
Hewson, Paul "Bono"—1908, 1930
Hickel, Walter J.—1711
Hickok, Eugene—1927, 1950
Higgins, Bradford R.—1937, 1954
Higgins, Kathryn—1913, 1945
Hill, J. Edward—1282
Hill, John L., Jr.—1556
Hillman, Mark—1778
Hines, Maria—1534
Hlophe, Ephraim Mandla—1928
Hoekstra, Peter—1782
Hofflund, Mark—1913, 1945
Hoffman, Alfred, Jr.—1912, 1944
Holbrooke, Richard C.—1908
Holden, Melvin L. "Kip"—1396
Holloway, A.J.—1386, 1388, 1389
Holst, Helga—1798
Honore, Russel L.—1384, 1392, 1414, 1416, 1417, 1480, 1919, 1920, 1922, 1924
Hornbeck, John A., Jr.—1614
Hotchkiss, Ralf—1265
Howard, Janette—1240, 1910
Howard, John—1240, 1910, 1936

Hu Jintao—1426, 1427, 1674–1676, 1680, 1685, 1686, 1726, 1727, 1746–1748, 1751–1753, 1755, 1756, 1916, 1919, 1937
Hubbard, Allan B.—1915
Hughes, Jerry—1407
Hughes, Karen P.—1407, 1690, 1928, 1935
Hughes, Lauren—1407
Hughes, Leigh—1407
Hughes, Robert—1407
Hume, Brit—1940
Hunsaker, Willie—1916
Hunt, Ray—1932
Hunter, Duncan D.—1374
Hunter, Duncan L.—1374
Hunter, Robert—1374
Hunter, Thomas O.—1311
Huntsman, Jon, Jr.—1336
Huntsman, Mary Kaye—1336
Hussein, Saddam—1331, 1342, 1350, 1421, 1581, 1582, 1593, 1595, 1621, 1626, 1706, 1707, 1714, 1715, 1743, 1779, 1783, 1785, 1787, 1792, 1819, 1821–1826, 1832, 1837–1839, 1842, 1847, 1851, 1852, 1855, 1872, 1875, 1881, 1882
Husseini, Rafiq—1585
Hutchison, Kathryn A. Bailey "Kay"—1482
Hyland, Gigi—1927, 1949

Ibrahim, Mardhiya Omar—1592, 1620
Immelt, Jeffrey R.—1612, 1689, 1690
Inhofe, James M.—1321
Insulza, Jose Miguel—1257, 1291
Isakson, Johnny—1264, 1266
Isamuddin, Nurjaman Riduan "Hambali"—1205, 1524, 1590, 1619, 1704
Israel, Christian—1911
Israel, Steve—1410

Jabar, Abbass Abdul—1787
Jackson, Alphonso R.—1219, 1220, 1436, 1800, 1896
Jackson, Jeanine E.—1933, 1951
Jackson, Jesse L., Jr.—1800
Jackson-Lee, Sheila—1560
Jackson, Marcia—1436
Jacobs, Jack H.—1478
Jacobs, Janice L.—1932, 1951
Jacobs, Kristin D.—1611
Jafari, Ibrahim al- —1842, 1843, 1941
Jakes, Thomas D., Sr.—1396, 1400
James, Hamilton E.—1926
James, Lisa—1364
Jarrett, Jeffrey D.—1918, 1946
Jawad, Said Tayeb—1408
Jefferson, William Jennings—1389, 1895
Jeffords, James M.—1282
Jenkins, James R.—1809
Jennings, Peter—1310
Jeremiah, David E.—1932
Jette, Richard E.—1741
Jiang Zemin—1678
Jindal, Bobby—1389
Johanns, Mike—1257, 1291, 1630, 1915
Johanns, Stephanie—1291
Johnson, Alice L.—1761
Johnson, Brenda LaGrange—1916, 1946
Johnson, Eric—1264
Johnson, Robert L.—1224
Johnson Sirleaf, Ellen—1938
Johnson, Stephen L.—1455, 1623
Johnson, Thomas—1374
Johnston, Thomas E.—1949
Jones, Anthony R.—1614
Jones, Myrtle—1372
Jones, Richard A.—1935
Jones, Richard H.—1912, 1944
Jordan, Vernon E., Jr.—1602, 1609
Joseph, Raymond Alcide—1928
Joye, Billy W., Jr.—1223
Juaristi, Vince J.—1941, 1955
Juncker, Jean-Claude—1178
Justice, Ron—1180

Kaczynski, Lech—1931
Kahn, Robert E.—1691
Kahne, Kasey K.—1942
Kanjorski, Paul E.—1700
Kantor, Jackie—1802
Kantor, Jenna—1802
Kantor, Melissa—1802
Karadzic, Radovan—1207
Karamat, Jehangir—1551
Karsner, Alexander A.—1941, 1955
Karzai, Hamid—1470, 1723, 1889, 1913, 1924
Kashyap, Anurag—1910
Kaur, Gursharan—1232, 1238, 1239
Kawar, Karim Tawfiq—1696
Kay, David—1715
Kaylor, Vicki—1364
Keating, Timothy J.—1384, 1480, 1919, 1926
Keen, Jerry—1264
Keenan, Steven D.—1334
Kell, Roland—1459, 1924
Kelly, James M.—1316
Kelly, James P.—1612, 1689, 1690, 1935
Kelly, Raymond W.—1410
Kempthorne, Dirk—1337, 1342, 1344, 1345
Kempthorne, Patricia—1345
Kendall, Virginia M.—1949

Kennedy, Anthony M.—1402
Kennedy, Brent—1547–1549
Kennedy, Debbie—1831
Kennedy, Edward M.—1282, 1630
Kennedy, Mark R.—1831
Kennedy, Sarah—1831
Kenney, Kristie A.—1933, 1951
Kerry, John—1800
Kesselman, Marc L.—1936, 1953
Khalifa bin Zayid al-Nuhayyan—1940
Khalilzad, Zalmay—1325, 1343, 1425, 1469, 1582, 1908, 1921, 1932
Khan, Abdul Qadeer—1524, 1591, 1619, 1705, 1713, 1743
Khanjar, Ahmad—1352
Khristenko, Viktor B.—1931
Kiley, Kevin C.—1894
Kilgore, Jerry W.—1671, 1911
Kilgore, Kelsey—1672
Kilgore, Klarke—1672
Kilgore, Marty—1672
Kim Chong-il—1245, 1319, 1656, 1719, 1755, 1780
Kimmitt, Robert M.—1891
King Abdallah bin Abd al-Aziz Al Saud—1289, 1290, 1914, 1918, 1938, 1940
King Abdullah II—1476, 1694–1696, 1924, 1935, 1939, 1940
King Fahd bin Abd al-Aziz Al Saud—1289, 1914
King, Peter T.—1410, 1560, 1770
King, Riley "B.B."—1808
King, Stephen C.—1935, 1953
Kingston, Jack—1264
Kirchner, Nestor—1638, 1641, 1642, 1647, 1649, 1652, 1928, 1934
Kirkland, Irena—1917
Kirsanow, Peter N.—1936, 1953
Kislak, Jay I.—1933
Kissinger, Henry A.—1528
Kline, John—1831
Knoller, Mark—1320
Koch, Edward I.—1436
Koizumi, Junichiro—1198, 1304, 1376, 1420, 1598, 1656 1674, 1677, 1681–1683, 1717, 1722–1724, 1745, 1772, 1780, 1793, 1833, 1848, 1894, 1923, 1930, 1936
Konetzni, Albert H., Jr.—1945
Kovacic, William E.—1913, 1945
Krutchik, Larry—1370
Krzyzewski, Mike—1213
Kufuor, John Agyekum—1932
Kwasniewska, Jolanta—1929
Kwasniewski, Aleksander—1543, 1927, 1929
Kwon Yang-sook—1936
Kyl, Arlene—1771
Kyl, Caryll—1771
Kyl, Jon L.—1355, 1356, 1496, 1560, 1765, 1770, 1771

Lacy, Andre B.—1915
Lafrenz, Lawrence F.—1346
Lagomasino, Maria E.—1653
Lagos, Ricardo—1934
LaHood, Ray H.—1321
Lambright, James—1909
Landreneau, Bennett C.—1384, 1390, 1542
Landrieu, Mary L.—1389, 1390
Lane, Robert W.—1653
Lapidus, Sidney—1436
LaPorte, Judy—1740
LaPorte, Leon J.—1740
Larranaga, Lorenzo A. "Larry"—1937
Larson, Stephen G.—1954
Lauer, Matt—1537
Lavin, Franklin L.—1913, 1945
Laws, Jerry L.—1909
Leahy, Patrick J.—1209, 1215, 1248, 1277, 1496, 1907, 1910
Leavitt, Michael O.—1282, 1332, 1358, 1370, 1398, 1467, 1630, 1634, 1797, 1818
Lee Hsien Loong—1208, 1210
Lee Jong-wook—1630, 1817
Lee Tae-sik—1935
Lefkowitz, Jay P.—1916, 1940
Lehman, Carolyn—1711
Lehman, Loren—1711
Leinwand, Kenneth J.—1478
Lenhard, Robert D.—1940, 1954
Leon, Paul S.—1366
Leon Rodriguez, Rene Antonio—1291
Leone-Glasser, Dorothy—1273
Levin, Carl—1714
Lewis Navarro, Samuel—1257
Libbi, Abu Faraj al- —1205, 1473
Libby, I. Lewis "Scooter"—1625
Lieberman, Joseph I.—1752, 1788, 1826
Limbert, John—1914
Linder, John E.—1264, 1631
Linkletter, Arthur G.—1942
Liu Yongqing—1750, 1937
Lloyd, Reginald I.—1954
Loaiza, Esteban A.—1532
Lockey, James E.—1932
Lombardo, Corine—1549, 1550
Longo, Tommy—1399
Lott, C. Trent—1385, 1386, 1397, 1418, 1459, 1895, 1897
Lowe, James M.—1203

Lowenkron, Barry F.—1913, 1945
Lowery, Clay—1916, 1946
Lowing, Carol—1275
Lugar, Richard G.—1291, 1496, 1797, 1800
Lula da Silva, Luiz Inacio—1637, 1639, 1642, 1655, 1656, 1661, 1663–1665, 1933, 1934, 1939
Lula da Silva, Marisa Leticia—1659, 1661, 1934
Lund, Gunnar Wiggo—1928

Macapagal-Arroyo, Gloria—1434
Madras, Bertha K.—1912, 1944
Maduro, Ricardo—1914, 1934
Mainella, Frances P.—1801
Maisonneuve, J.O. Michel—1614
Maisto, John F.—1257
Mallias, Alexandros P.—1928
Manabe, Hitoshi—1809
Manning, David G.—1200
Mansfield, Gordon H.—1908
Marcus, Bernard—1463
Marin, Carlos—1915
Marine, Michael W.—1908
Marshall, Cecilia Suyat—1495
Marshall, Jim—1938
Martin, Paul—1918, 1930, 1937
Martin, Richard B.—1801
Martinez, Carmen M.—1921, 1947
Mason, David M.—1940, 1954
Matheson, James D.—1337
Matheson, Sue—1542
Mattice, Harry Sandlin, Jr.—1945
Matz, William McDowell, Jr.—1927
Maupin, John E., Jr.—1915, 1946
Mayes, M. Scott—1484
Mbeki, Thabo—1176
McCain, John—1765, 1770–1773, 1859
McCallum, Robert D., Jr.—1916
McCarrick, Theodore E.—1938
McCarthy, Carolyn—1410
McCarthy, John J.—1614
McCaw, Susan Rasinski—1928, 1949
McClellan, Mark B.—1267, 1271–1273, 1358–1361, 1369–1371, 1849
McClellan, Scott—1271, 1720
McConnell, Addison M. "Mitch"—1496, 1932, 1933
McConnell, Jack—1908
McCormick, James L., II—1182
McCormick, William P.—1913, 1945
McCrery, James O., III—1895
McDonnell, Maureen—1672
McDonnell, Robert F.—1672
McElhaney, Douglas L.—1908
McGaffigan, Edward, Jr.—1913, 1945
McGee, James D.—1953
McGinty, John J., III—1374
McGlothlin, Donald—1856
McGraw, Phillip "Dr. Phil"—1858
McGraw, Robin—1858
McHenry, Patrick T.—1809
McInnis, Rodney R.—1941
McKinnell, Henry A. "Hank," Jr.—1612, 1689, 1690, 1935
McKinnell, Noel M.—1936
McKinnon, Mark—1946, 1950
McLhinney, Gary W.—1254
McMillin, Stephen S.—1934
McMurray, Claudia A.—1936, 1953
McNulty, Paul J.—1931, 1952
McPeak, Merrill A. "Tony"—1500
Meese, Edwin, III—1573
Meese, Ursula—1573
Mehlis, Detlev—1545, 1575, 1580, 1581
Mehlman, Kenneth B.—1463, 1596–1599
Merkel, Angela—1929, 1938, 1939
Meron, Daniel—1936, 1953
Meyerrose, Dale W.—1917, 1947
Michalak, Michael W.—1937, 1953
Miers, Harriet E.—1496, 1502, 1504, 1505, 1511, 1514, 1515, 1530, 1535, 1536, 1539, 1544, 1555, 1556, 1570, 1578, 1601, 1612, 1871, 1925, 1927, 1928, 1932, 1949, 1951
Miers, Sally—1503, 1504
Miller, Gary G.—1366
Miller, Michael H.—1374
Miller, Paul—1573
Miller, Zell B.—1915
Millett, Lewis L.—1374, 1741
Mineta, Norman Y.—1320, 1630
Mintz, Suzanne Geffen—1282
Mitchell, William—1938
Mitcheltree, Joshua—1918
Mladic, Ratko—1207
Modrzejewski, Robert J.—1374
Mohammed, Khalid Sheikh—1205, 1473
Molino, John M.—1916, 1946, 1954
Moller, Patricia N.—1932, 1951
Molnau, Carol—1831
Mondello, Lisette M.—1916, 1933, 1946
Monheit, Jane—1858
Montgomery, G.V. "Sonny"—1691
Monty, Jacob—1937
Moreno de Uribe, Lina—1305, 1909, 1914
Moreno Mejia, Luis Alberto—1663
Morris, Ken—1370, 1371
Morris, Michael A.—1916
Morris, Thomas E.—1909

Morrison, John L.—1932
Morrison, Philip D.—1950
Morrison, Ron—1809
Mosbacher, Robert A., Jr.—1891
Mowery, Don R.—1362
Moyer, Ellen O.—1782
Mubarak, Mohamed Hosni—1278, 1911
Mueller, James R.—1337, 1938
Mueller, Robert S., III—1202
Mugabe, Robert—1176
Mugyenyi, Peter—1799
Muhammadi, Izzad al- —1841
Mulcahy, Anne M.—1612, 1689, 1690, 1935
Mulkey-Robertson, Kim—1249
Mullen, Michael G.—1782
Murkowski, Frank H.—1711
Murkowski, Lisa—1710
Murkowski, Nancy Gore—1711
Murphy, Gregg A.—1550
Murphy, Timothy—1938
Murtha, John P., Jr.—1751, 1754
Musgrave, Marilyn N.—1532, 1778
Musgrave, Steve—1778
Musharraf, Pervez—1235, 1525, 1551, 1591, 1619, 1705, 1912, 1936
Muslet, Nashwan Mijhim—1705
Mutleq, Saleh al- —1343, 1841
Mutter, Carol Ann—1909
Myers, Cole—1498
Myers, Erin—1498
Myers, Mary Jo—1498–1500, 1691, 1942
Myers, Nicole—1498
Myers, Richard B.—1384, 1408, 1469, 1498, 1691, 1915, 1918, 1919, 1927
Myers, Richard, Jr.—1498
Myers, Sophie—1498
Myrick, Sue—1223

Nabarro, David—1630
Nagin, C. Ray—1384, 1389, 1390, 1392, 1414, 1418, 1441, 1449, 1455, 1460, 1461, 1490, 1538, 1696, 1885, 1919, 1922, 1924, 1929
Nance, Jonnie—1586
Nang Charm Tong—1933
Napolitano, Janet—1356, 1765
Nashiri, Abd al-Rahim al- —1205, 1524, 1590, 1619, 1704, 1713
Natsios, Andrew S.—1612, 1797, 1803, 1914, 1940
Nazareth, Annette L.—1911, 1944
Neese, Terry—1913, 1945, 1948
Negroponte, John D.—1202, 1408, 1559, 1891
Nelson, Alan R.—1915
Nelson, Keith A.—1909, 1943
Nelson, Pamela—1915
Nenova, Nasya—1554
Netanyahu, Binyamin—1329
Neugebauer, Randy—1257
Neumann, Ronald E.—1910, 1931
Newman, Constance Berry—1914
Newman, Paul L.—1806
Nicely, Michael C.—1765
Nicholls, Edward—1412
Nicholson, R. James—1336, 1630
Nicklaus, Jack W.—1693
Noriega, Roger F.—1951
Norton, Gale A.—1485, 1801
Norton, Jane E.—1778
Norwood, Bryon W.—1911
Norwood, Janet—1911
Norwood, William—1911
Nostrand, Peter F.—1801
Novarro, Lisa—1412
Nussle, James A.—1889

Obama, Barack—1321
Oberstar, James L.—1321
Oberwetter, James C.—1914
O'Brien, Robert C.—1935, 1953
O'Connor, John J., III—1169
O'Connor, Sandra Day—1169, 1230, 1266, 1393, 1395, 1399, 1402, 1495, 1502–1504, 1535, 1555, 1773, 1907, 1928
Odierno, Linda—1586
O'Gara, James F.X.—1913, 1945
O'Keefe, Sean—1306
Oliver, Jack L., III—1940
Olmstead, Francis H., Jr.—1286
O'Malley, Martin—1250
O'Neill, Louis—1624
Opfer, George J.—1920, 1946
Orbach, Raymond L.—1940, 1954
Orlowski, Janis M.—1282
Osburn, Stephanie R.—1932
O'Sullivan, Meghan L.—1934
Ott, JoAnne—1337
Otter, C.L. "Butch"—1345
Otter, Regina—1345
Owens, Bill—1778

Pace, Doris—1498
Pace, Elizabeth—1498
Pace, Lynne—1498, 1586
Pace, Peter—1498, 1519, 1521, 1914, 1931
Pace, Peter, Jr.—1498
Pace, Sim—1498
Pace, Tiffany M.—1498
Pace, Tom—1498
Pacheco, Abel—1934

Paisley, Ian R.K.—1913
Palau, Luis—1747, 1755
Palmeiro, Rafael C.—1249, 1516
Palmer, Arnold D.—1693
Palmer, John L.—1933, 1952
Pamintuan, Rudy—1938
Parde, Duane—1296
Parks, Rosa L.—1586, 1800, 1933
Parsons, Laura—1858
Parsons, Richard D.—1858
Pate-Cornell, Elizabeth—1932
Patterson, Anne W.—1931, 1950
Patterson, Patti—1263
Paul, Jerry—1916
Paulison, R. David—1491, 1577, 1922, 1931, 1932
Pavarotti, Luciano—1808
Pawlenty, Timothy—1831
Paxon, L. William—1597
Paxon, Susan R.—1597
Payne, Donald M.—1914, 1935, 1953
Payne, James Hardy—1949
Pearce, Cynthia—1311
Pearce, Stevan—1311
Pellegrino, Edmund D.—1921
Pence, Mike—1782
Perdue, Mary—1264
Perdue, Sonny—1264, 1486
Perry, Rick—1461, 1463, 1470, 1482, 1491, 1774, 1925, 1926
Petersen, Friis Arne—1928
Peterson, Bart—1216
Peterson, David A.—1355
Petraeus, David H.—1519, 1592, 1620, 1706, 1928
Petri, Thomas E.—1321
Phumiphon Adunyadet—1456, 1457
Pitts, Joseph R.—1837
Plame, Valerie—1214, 1234, 1244, 1508, 1511, 1540, 1554, 1578, 1669
Pollin, Abe—1436
Portman, Robert Jones—1257, 1291, 1669, 1817, 1915
Posten, David—1334
Poston, John W., Sr.—1932
Potenza, Vito T.—1871
Powell, Colin L.—1176, 1194, 1623, 1914
Powell, Donald E.—1696, 1896, 1897, 1933
Pozen, Robert C.—1269
Pratt, Stephen N.—1548, 1549
Price, John—1463
Price, Tom—1631
Prillaman, Kenneth G.—1918
Prince Charles of Wales—1644, 1929, 1933
Prince Consort Henrik—1907
Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh—1908
Principi, Anthony J.—1439
Prosper, Pierre-Richard—1908
Pruett, Eren—1346
Pruett, Eric—1346
Pruett, Evan—1346
Pruett, Greg—1346
Pruett, Jeff—1346
Pruett, Leon—1346
Pruett, Tammy—1346
Puram, Prakash V.—1926
Purvanov, Georgi—1553, 1919
Putin, Vladimir—1426, 1446, 1546, 1739, 1919, 1924

Queen Elizabeth II—1908
Queen Margrethe II—1172, 1195, 1907

Racicot, Marc—1332, 1467
Radice, Anne-Imelda—1940, 1954
Ramstad, James—1831
Randolph, Annie—1933
Rascon, Alfred V.—1478
Rasmussen, Anders Fogh—1172, 1173, 1189, 1907
Rasmussen, Anne-Mette—1907
Raul, Alan C.—1948
Reagan, Nancy—1572–1574, 1931
Redd, John S. "Scott"—1559
Redford, C. Robert, Jr.—1806
Regan, Peter—1411
Rehnquist, James—1393, 1402
Rehnquist, Janet—1393, 1402
Rehnquist, William H.—1247, 1277, 1393, 1402, 1920
Reid, Harry—1209, 1215, 1248, 1277, 1714, 1876, 1893, 1897, 1899, 1907, 1910
Reinemund, Steven S.—1653
Reiter, Janusz—1928
Rempt, Rodney P.—1782
Retzer, Michael L.—1941
Reynes, Joseph, Jr.—1741
Reynes, Karen—1741
Reynolds, James—1909
Rhodes, Thomas L. "Dusty"—1528
Ricciardone, Francis J., Jr.—1912, 1944
Rice, Condoleezza—1280, 1288, 1291, 1308, 1323, 1332, 1334, 1343, 1344, 1407, 1409, 1498, 1520, 1575, 1580, 1581, 1584, 1591, 1619, 1630, 1693, 1740, 1797, 1800, 1851, 1891, 1909, 1910, 1915, 1927, 1928, 1935, 1939, 1942
Richardson, Dennis J.—1909
Rifkind, Robert S.—1436

Riley, Bob—1353, 1384, 1385, 1387, 1392, 1917, 1919
Rivers, Diane—1912, 1944
Rivkin, Yochanan—1465
Robb, Charles S.—1204, 1941
Robb, Lynda Johnson—1698
Roberts, Corinne B.—1942
Roberts, Jane M.—1248, 1278, 1495, 1910
Roberts, John G., Jr.—1247, 1248, 1250, 1257, 1266, 1277, 1278, 1284, 1299, 1395, 1399, 1488, 1495, 1502–1506, 1514, 1515, 1536, 1570, 1601, 1773, 1835, 1877, 1910, 1927, 1928, 1945–1947
Roberts, John G., Sr.—1495
Roberts, John "Jack"—1248, 1278, 1495
Roberts, Josephine—1248, 1278, 1495
Roberts, Margaret "Peggy"—1495
Roberts, Rosemary—1495
Robinson, Adam M., Jr.—1285, 1894
Robinson, Barbara Ann—1693
Robinson, Frank—1693
Robinson, Matthew S.—1934
Rockefeller, John "Jay" D., IV—1714
Rodgers, Mary—1940
Rogers, Harold D.—1560
Rogers, Joyce—1216
Roh Moo-hyun—1674, 1677, 1679, 1684, 1729, 1734–1736, 1925, 1930, 1936
Rohrabacher, Dana—1573
Roman, Nancy E.—1820
Romney, Mitt—1463
Rooney, Laurence F.—1913, 1945
Ros-Lehtinen, Ileana—1532
Rosch, J. Thomas—1927, 1949
Rose, Winfield—1939
Rosenfeld, Arthur F.—1911, 1943
Rothfork, Pete—1761
Rove, Karl—1540, 1650
Royce, Edward R.—1935, 1953
Royster, F. Brooks, III—1250
Rubin, Frank—1478
Rubin, Lai—1478
Rubin, Rosalyn—1478
Rubin, Tibor "Ted"—1437, 1478
Rubin, Yvonne—1478
Rumsfeld, Donald H.—1286, 1323, 1326, 1327, 1332, 1374, 1384, 1469, 1478, 1498, 1499, 1519, 1520, 1693, 1756, 1782, 1797, 1851, 1909, 1911, 1915, 1918, 1919, 1921, 1925, 1928, 1933, 1935, 1939
Rumsfeld, Joyce—1586
Ruppersberger, C.A. "Dutch"—1250, 1251, 1255
Rusesabagina, Paul—1692
Rush, Bobby L.—1321
Ryan, Frederick J., Jr.—1572

Sabah al-Ahmad al-Jabir al-Sabah—1907, 1940
Saca Gonzalez, Elias Antonio—1228, 1908, 1910, 1912, 1930, 1934
Sager, Nancy—1939
Salazar, Eleuterio, Jr.—1533
Salazar, Rebekah—1560
Salih, Ali Abdallah—1695, 1934, 1935
Salisbury, Matt—1349
Sambuu-Yondon, N.—1757
Sanderson, Janet A.—1935, 1952
Sansom, William B.—1953
Santorum, Rick—1837
Sasso, William R.—1837
Sauerbrey, Ellen R.—1918, 1946
Saving, Thomas R.—1933, 1952
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