

Remarks Following a Meeting With Congressional Leaders *September 7, 2001*

Thank you all for coming. Today, visiting with the Speaker and the Leader, it's the end of a long week of discussing how to make sure our economy begins to grow again.

I want to appreciate Denny and Trent for coming down again. They've been visiting with their Members, and I've been visiting with them and their Members. I also had a good discussion today with Minority Leader Gephardt and, of course, Senate Majority Leader Daschle the other day, as well, about how we can kind of get away from all the distractions that tend to dominate Washington and focus on a pro-growth agenda for this fall.

The unemployment numbers today are evidence that I've seen firsthand as I travel the country, and that is, too many people are losing their jobs as a result of a slowdown that began when Dick and I were campaigning across our country last summer. This slowdown is real, and it's affecting too many lives, and we're concerned about it.

Any American out of work is too many Americans out of work. And that's why it's absolutely essential that we work together to put a growth plan in place to create jobs for hard-working Americans. It starts with having a responsible budget that meets our Nation's obligations without affecting Social Security or dipping into Social Security.

We made a great step toward economic growth when we worked together to pass

tax relief. One-half of the checks have gone out; more relief is on the way this fall, which should help our economy. Beginning in January 1st, Americans will see lower tax rates, lower withholding from their paychecks, and a larger tax credit.

Tax relief is just now making its way in the economy, and there are some, it seems like, who are beginning to say, "Maybe we ought to raise taxes." But I can assure you, the four of us on this stage are not going to let anybody pick the pockets of the American taxpayer.

To help get our economy moving again, Congress needs to enact an energy plan which will lower energy costs and create jobs. To get the economy moving again, Congress needs to enact trade promotion authority, so we can open up new markets for American products.

We've got a plan to get our economy moving so Americans can find work. And today I want to thank the leadership of the Congress from the Republican side that came and strategized with the Vice President and me as how to get this plan moving. I want the American people to know we're deeply concerned about the unemployment rates, and we intend to do something about it.

Thank you all very much.

NOTE: The exchange began at 3:07 p.m. on the South Grounds of the White House.

The President's Radio Address *September 8, 2001*

Good morning. This weekend in Washington my wife, Laura, is hosting the first

National Book Festival, continuing a tradition she began as first lady of Texas. With