

desirous to get into the Mitchell process, but first things first. These terrorist acts and the responses have got to end in order for us to get the framework—the groundwork, not framework—the groundwork to discuss a framework, to lay the—all right.

Q. Have you made any calls yourself, sir?

The President. I've made a lot of calls over—you mean the last couple of days? No, I haven't, not over the last couple of days. Secretary Powell did—I'm, of course, very aware of how the conversations went.

NOTE: The exchange began at 8:53 a.m. at the Bosque Valley Golf Club. In his remarks, the President referred to Chairman Yasser Arafat of the Palestinian Authority and Prime Minister Ariel Sharon of Israel. He also referred to the Report of the Sharm el-Sheikh Fact-Finding Committee, chaired by former Senator George J. Mitchell, issued April 30. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this exchange.

Remarks on Signing Agriculture Economic Assistance Legislation in Crawford, Texas *August 13, 2001*

Please be seated. Thanks. I want to thank you all for coming. And I have the honor of signing a piece of legislation that was passed out of the House and the Senate in record time. It's a piece of legislation to provide economic assistance to the ag communities all across America. It's \$5.5 billion in total. This money is on top of the monies in the 2001 farm bill. And it's necessary. It's necessary for our ranchers and our farmers.

First, I want to thank my neighbors for coming. This is, I guess, maybe the first bill signing ceremony ever in Crawford, Texas. [*Laughter*] I don't think it will be the last. It's a meaningful piece of legislation for this part of the country because a lot of people make their living on the farm and on the ranch. And we want our families to be on the farms and ranch. After all, farm families represent the best of America. They represent the values that have made this country unique and different: values of love of family; values of respect for nature—I always tell people that every day is Earth Day when you own your farm, when you're working the land; values in understanding that there's some things

beyond our control, that the Almighty controls the weather, sometimes in ways we like and sometimes in ways we don't like; values of hard work; values of the entrepreneurial spirit; and values of private property. These are really important values that make America different and America unique, and values that we need to keep intact.

I'm worried about the fact that the ag economy suffers, because agriculture is a part of our national security mix. If we can't grow enough food to feed our people, we've got a problem. It will complicate our foreign policy, needless to say. Well, we've got to make sure our ag economy stays strong and healthy, and this supplemental is a way to help do that.

And so I want to thank you all for coming. I was hoping it would start raining in the middle of this little talk—[*laughter*—and then I could take credit for it.

I think one of the things, as well, that I really appreciate about the Crawford area is the fact that there is a concept of neighborliness. People say, well—I go downtown, and I have a nice burger the other day with some people, and they say—they walk

up and say, “I’m your neighbor.” That’s an important concept for our country because a neighbor means more than just somebody living next door to somebody else. A neighbor means that there’s somebody around willing to help somebody.

I tell people all the time that the great strength of this country is in the fact that we’ve got such loving and decent people all across America who, when they find a neighbor in need, are willing to help out, are willing to help that neighbor. And that doesn’t require any Government law; you can’t pass a law that says, “Thou shalt love

thy neighbor,” or “You will be neighborly.” That’s because America is full of just such decent people.

And so I want to welcome my neighbors, and I want to thank you all for coming. And it is my honor now to sign this piece of meaningful legislation that should make the lives of the people who farm and the people who ranch much better off.

May God bless you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at noon at the Bush Ranch. H.R. 2213, approved August 13, was assigned Public Law No. 107–25.

Exchange With Reporters in Crawford August 13, 2001

Stem Cell Research/Macedonia

Q. Mr. President, some people in Congress are talking about passing legislation to allow stem cell research on embryos that are still in fertility clinics—

The President. I’ve said all I’m going to say for a while.

Q. Would you veto legislation like that?

The President. The statement I laid out is what I think is right for America. And any piece of legislation that undermines what I think is right will be vetoed.

I don’t know if you all know, but they signed a bill in Macedonia today, an agreement to work out the language, as well as the policing, and it’s a good sign. But now they need to lay down their arms so we can implement the peace.

President Vladimir Putin of Russia

Q. Did you get any feedback from Mr. Rumsfeld’s meeting with Mr. Putin?

The President. I haven’t talked to him yet.

It’s right here that Mr. Putin is going to come, right to Crawford, Texas, one of these days. I’m sure he’ll love it.

Q. Where are they going to stay?

The President. We haven’t worked out the logistics yet. [Laughter] Got any recommendations? Oh, where he’s going to stay? He’ll stay here. I thought you said, “Where are they going to stay,” meaning the thousand press that follow. [Laughter]

[At this point, there was a pause in the exchange.]

President’s Vacation

Q. So what are you going to do for the rest of the day?

The President. Got a lot of friends coming in—and then get ready for my trip. Got some speeches to give tomorrow and Wednesday, in New Mexico. I’ve got to figure out what I’m going to say.

Stem Cell Research

Q. One more question on stem cells, if I may?

The President. You can ask it, but I’ve already answered it.

Q. Well, I’ll ask and—

The President. I answered it Thursday night, when I gave an address to the Nation.