

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:50 p.m. at Riderwood retirement community. In his remarks, he referred to Richard S. Foster, Chief Actuary, Centers for Medicare & Med-

icaid Services; President Pervez Musharraf of Pakistan; and President Vladimir V. Putin of Russia.

## Remarks at a Celebration of Hungarian Contributions to Democracy March 15, 2006

Thank you all. Please be seated. Mr. Speaker, thank you for having me here in this beautiful Capitol to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the Hungarian Revolution.

I appreciate being here with the mayor of our city, Mayor Williams. Good to see you, Mr. Mayor. I appreciate Chairman Hyde. Mr. Chairman, it's good to see you. I thank the members of the diplomatic corps, most particularly, Ambassador Walker. I've heard of him before. [*Laughter*] Ambassador Simonyi—thank you all. Members of Congress, most particularly a beacon for—a steadfast beacon for liberty is how I'd like to define my friend Tom Lantos.

I've come today to—not only to thank our strong ally, the Government of Hungary and the people of Hungary, but I've come to thank my friend Tom Lantos, and his wife, Annette, for never letting anybody forget that freedom is precious and necessary in our world.

The Hungarian example is an example of patience and an example of the fact that freedom exists in everybody's soul. It's an example that tyranny can never stamp out the desire to be free. It's an example that—of a country that once becomes free, joins with other freedom-loving countries to keep the peace.

I've come to remind the people of Hungary, they've got a great friend in America. I want to thank, by the way, the Hungarian Americans who are here with us today. You've made a significant contribution to our country.

You know, it's an interesting world in which we live. There's an argument about—in some places—about whether or not freedom is universal, whether or not freedom is okay for some parts of the world but not others. I believe freedom is universal. I believe the example of Hungary proves that freedom is universal. I believe everybody desires to live in freedom. I believe there's an Almighty, and I believe the Almighty God's gift to each person in this world is liberty. And I believe the United States, and I believe Hungary, and I believe other free nations have the responsibility to help other people realize their freedom as well.

You know, one of the interesting examples of Europe that I try to explain to our people is that for 100 years, there were war, where a lot of people lost their lives and a lot of Americans lost their life. But today, Europe is at peace. Europe is whole, free, and at peace. And I believe the reason why is because democracy has taken hold on that continent. And one of the leading lights of democracy has been Hungary.

We thank the Hungarian people for their example. We thank them for their contribution in helping the newly free in Afghanistan and Iraq realize the blessings of liberty. We thank them for being allies in keeping the peace.

Mr. Speaker, thanks for letting me come by and pay my respects to a strong ally and a good friend but also pay my respects to Congressman Tom Lantos, a person who

understands the difference between freedom and tyranny, and a person who is willing to speak his mind all times, all places, everywhere.

God bless you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 5:45 p.m. in Statutory Hall at the U.S. Capitol. In his remarks, he referred to Mayor Anthony A. Williams of Washington, DC; U.S. Ambassador to Hungary George H. Walker III; and Hungary's Ambassador to the U.S. Andras Simonyi.

## Remarks Following a Meeting With Members of Congress *March 16, 2006*

It's been my pleasure to host Republicans and Democrats from both the House and the Senate here to talk about budget reform. We're talking about the way to—for the executive branch and the legislative branch to work in a cooperative fashion to help make sure that the appropriations bills we pass are—meet priorities, that they are—that the process is transparent, that we're able to say to the American people, "We care about how we spend your money."

Part of the budget reform process is a line-item veto. I want to thank the Members here who have come, who have offered not only constructive advice but practical applications of the line-item veto so that it becomes law. And I listened carefully to some constructive suggestions from both Republicans and Democrats as to how

to get a piece of legislation passed. The American people expect all of us from both parties to work diligently as to how we spend their money. And one way that we can earn the confidence of the people is to pass a line-item veto.

And again, I want to thank the Members for being here. It means a lot that people from both parties are here. I particularly want to thank my opponent in the 2004 campaign, Senator Kerry, for being here. I can remember on the campaign trail, he said that he supported a line-item veto, and he is following through on his word by being here at the table. I'm proud you're here, Senator.

Thank you all for coming.

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

## Remarks on Signing the Stop Counterfeiting in Manufactured Goods Act *March 16, 2006*

Thank you. Welcome. Thanks for coming. In a few moments, I will sign a bill that protects the hard work of American innovators, strengthens the rule of law, and helps keep our families and consumers safe. The Stop Counterfeiting in Manufactured Goods Act has earned broad support, and I want to thank all those who helped get this bill passed for being here today. I want

to thank the lawmakers from both political parties for getting this piece of legislation to this desk. I want to thank the consumer protection groups who have joined us as well. Thanks for your hard work on this important piece of legislation.

I want to thank the Attorney General, Al Gonzales, who has joined us; the Secretary of Commerce, Carlos Gutierrez; my