

death because of its failure to distribute anti-retrovirals. How do you explain the amount of criticism that you're coming in for in the United States for what is a perception that you're not doing enough on HIV?

President Mbeki. Well, I'll—we've said—all I would say to that, really, is that people must look at what we're doing in South Africa, not their perception of what they think we're doing but what we're doing actually in the country. And I don't think on the basics of facts an accusation like that can be sustained.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:27 a.m. in the Oval Office at the White House.

Joint Statement by President George W. Bush and President Thabo Mbeki
June 26, 2001

President Bush and President Mbeki committed to build on and strengthen the already excellent ties between the United States and South Africa. We committed ourselves to achieving our shared goals of building a stronger strategic partnership and promoting economic growth and democracy in Africa and globally.

We reaffirmed that our governments will meet regularly, to consult on bilateral, regional, and multilateral issues of shared importance, and that ongoing cooperative efforts, begun under the direction of the Binational Commission, shall continue and be enhanced in the critical areas of agriculture; conservation, environment, and water; defense; health; housing; human resource development and education; justice and anti-crime; science and technology; sustainable energy; and trade and investment. We will establish a joint secretariat to direct and coordinate the consultations and to provide recommendations to both governments.

We discussed the Millennium Africa Recovery Program (MAP) and agreed to work together for a prosperous, democratic Africa. We affirmed our support for the MAP's core goals of conflict resolution, good governance, sound economic management, and fighting HIV/AIDS and other infectious diseases.

We affirmed that additional efforts to combat the devastating effects of HIV/AIDS and

other infectious diseases are urgently needed, and we renewed our commitment to working together against them and the conditions that enable the diseases to proliferate. We agreed to support the establishment and funding of the global trust fund for HIV/AIDS and other diseases as a unique public-private partnership to bring needed resources to the battle against these diseases through a multi-sector, integrated strategy.

We pledged to work together to support the launching of a new round of World Trade Organization negotiations and affirmed that we have many common interests, in particular the growth of agricultural trade and a shared commitment to working together to bridge the digital divide in Africa. Likewise, we confirmed our satisfaction that the African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA) has produced positive results in South Africa, and has already led to expanded trade and investment between the two countries.

We affirmed our mutual desire for a peaceful, democratic, prosperous Zimbabwe, in which human rights and rule of law are respected. We agreed that a dialogue between the Government of Angola and UNITA rebels on implementing the Lusaka Protocol offers the best promise for peace. We affirmed our commitment to progress toward resolving the conflict in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DROC) and agreed to cooperate on conflict resolution efforts throughout Africa.

President Bush looks forward to the opportunity to visit South Africa as part of the effort to continue building and fostering the growth of our bilateral relationship and promoting our shared agenda.

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

Remarks at the Swearing-In Ceremony for Howard H. Baker, Jr., as Ambassador to Japan
June 26, 2001

Senator Baker, you've drawn quite a crowd here to the White House. [Laughter] Mr. Vice President; Mr. Secretary. CIA Director George Tenet, I believe is here. Justice O'Connor is here; thank you so much for

coming. The Ambassador from Japan is here. Thank you very much for being here, Mr. Ambassador, and your lovely wife. Madeleine Albright, I believe is here—Madame Secretary. Larry Eagleburger is here. Elizabeth Dole, I believe is here. Senator. Elizabeth, thank you very much. The former Ambassadors to the country of Japan are on the stage with us; they have been introduced. Members of the United States Senate are here. Members of the Tennessee congressional delegation are here.

Thank you all for coming, and welcome. Today we call upon one of America's most valued statesmen to help be the keeper of one of America's most valued friendships. Howard Baker has held many titles during the course of his long and distinguished career, they include sailor, Senator, minority leader, majority leader, and White House Chief of Staff. In a few moments, he'll add Ambassador to that list, and once again, America is very grateful.

All the former Ambassadors here are living examples of the very highest standards of diplomatic excellence. And between them, Mike Mansfield, Walter Mondale, Tom Foley, and Howard Baker have accumulated over 100 years of elected office. [Laughter] That's a lot of balloon drops. [Laughter]

Thirty-four of those years are accounted for by Mike Mansfield alone. The Senator began the tradition of high-level political figures serving as our Ambassador to Japan. He held that post for more than 11 years, longer than anyone else. Japanese press calls these figures *o-mono*—the big guys. [Laughter] Well, we're all very honored to have the original big guy with us.

And by the way, Senator Thurmond, he informed me—with quite clear language—that he is 4 months younger than you are. [Laughter]

We send the very best people to Japan because the United States has no more important partner in the world than Japan. Our alliance is rooted in the vital strategic and economic interests that we share. It is the cornerstone of peace and prosperity in Asia. Today, this partnership is helping us tackle global problems, as well.

I'm looking forward to welcoming the Prime Minister this weekend at Camp David.

Together, we will explore ways we can continue to strengthen our security relationship. We will talk about the Prime Minister's agenda for reforming and revitalizing the Japanese economy. We'll discuss how our countries can work together on realistic and effective responses to global problems such as AIDS in Africa and climate change.

I will also tell the Prime Minister that America's 38th Ambassador to Japan is a man of extraordinary ability, grace, and good humor. In every post he has held, Howard Baker has brought uncommon intelligence and an uncanny ability to calm the ship of state, even in days of crisis.

He comes from good stock. His grandmother, Lillie "Mother Ladd" Mauser—[laughter]—was Tennessee's first woman sheriff. [Laughter] His father and his stepmother both served in the House. He married into good stock, as well. He counts Senator Everett Dirksen and the grand old man of the Grand Old Party, Alf Landon, as fathers-in-law. And what the Prime Minister is going to find out, he took an extraordinary woman as a bride in Senator Nancy Kassebaum Baker.

In the Senate, Howard Baker had a list of rules for being an effective Senator. He called it the Baker's Dozen. The list included: listen more often than you speak; be patient; tell the truth, whether you have to or not; and finally, be civil and encourage others to do the same.

Well, these rules help explain why Howard Baker has made such a mark on American history. They are why he's going to keep making his mark for the years to come.

Congratulations.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:48 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Shunji Yanai, Japanese Ambassador to the United States, and his wife, Toshiko; former Secretary of State Madeleine K. Albright; former Deputy Secretary of State Lawrence S. Eagleburger; former Senator Bob Dole and his wife, former Transportation Secretary Elizabeth Dole; and Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi of Japan. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of Ambassador Baker.

Remarks Prior to Discussions With Prime Minister Ariel Sharon of Israel and an Exchange With Reporters

June 26, 2001

President Bush. It's my honor to welcome back to the Oval Office Prime Minister Sharon. He is a leader who has faced extraordinary circumstances in the Middle East. I believe he's shown patience and is willing to lead. I understand the pressures he is under.

Today it's my opportunity to once again look him in the eye and tell him he's got no better friend than the United States and, as well, tell him that we all must work to break the cycle of violence so that we can begin the process of implementing the Mitchell agreement. Our fervent hope in this Nation is that there is peace in the Middle East.

And I'm so honored you came back, Mr. Prime Minister, and I look forward to having the discussion with you that—it will be an add-on to the great discussion we had the last time you were here.

Welcome.

Prime Minister Sharon. Thank you, Mr. President. I'm very glad to be here again. Israel is committed to peace, will make every effort to reach peace. Peace should be peace for generations, and peace should provide security to the Israeli citizens.

The Jewish people are having one tiny, small country, that is Israel—[*inaudible*]—would have the right and the capability to defend themselves by themselves. And that, of course, we have to preserve, and we have to thank God for that every day.

We are committed to the Mitchell report in its sequence, according to sequence. We adopted the Mitchell report, and we received Tenet document—Tenet plan. And we'll be willing to continue. The one thing that we are looking for is, first of all, it would be full cessation of hostilities, of terror, and incitement. If that would happen, I am fully convinced that the day will come, and we'll have peace in the Middle East.

I would like to thank Mr. President again for coming here. We regard your administration to be a very friendly one, and we would like to thank you for that.

President Bush. And as you know, Mr. Prime Minister, our Secretary of State leaves tonight for the Middle East, and our fervent hope is to advance the process for making sure there's peace in that part of the world.

We'll be glad to answer a question apiece.

Situation in the Middle East

Q. Mr. President, do you expect Prime Minister Sharon—do you expect Prime Minister Sharon to negotiate under fire, Mr. President?

White House Aide. Mr. Fournier of the Associated Press.

Q. Mr. President, the same question to both of you. Do you think it is possible—do you think it's appropriate to move to the next step in the Mitchell report? They call for a cooling-off period even before there's a full cessation of violence.

President Bush. I think that there has to be. The cycle of violence must be broken. I look forward to discussing with the Prime Minister about what's realistic and what's possible. But we both believe that it is possible if there's a strong effort made by both parties to break the cycle of violence.

Mitchell says it's a sequential process. Step one is to break the cycle. And we have been on the phone with all parties—all the time it seems like—urging the cycle of violence to be broken. And progress is being made. I am here to tell the Prime Minister, I know there's a level of frustration, but there is progress being made. And for that progress, we are grateful.

The Prime Minister has shown a lot of patience in the midst of a lot of—in the midst of casualty. But progress is being made. Is it as fast as we'd like? No, it's not. But the fundamental question my administration makes is, are we making progress; is peace closer today than it was yesterday? We believe the answer is, yes.

And therefore, the Secretary of State leaves tonight to try to advance the process, to make peace more real. And he's going to meet not only with the Israelis; he'll be meeting with the Palestinians, as well; urging—urging the cycle of violence to be broken.

Q. The question to both of you, though, is, can we move to step two now, even though there is not a complete end to violence?