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The President. Well, I appreciate that question. One thing is, we can help deal with the AIDS pandemic. A society which is ravished by AIDS is a society which is likely to be unstable. And therefore, if we can bring good health care to the millions who suffer and love to the orphans whose parents might have died from AIDS, it makes it easier to have a stable platform for growth.

Secondly, trade: I'm a big backer of what they call AGOA, which is trade agreements between African countries and the United States. Trade is more likely to make societies prosperous. Our aid program needs to promote the habits necessary for the evolution of a free society. In other words, we're not going to give money to corrupt rulers, and we're not going to give money to nontransparent societies. The American taxpayer and this American President believes that in return for aid—and we've got a generous amount of aid available—we expect people to take care of their people by educating them and creating good health care. We expect there to be market-oriented economies growing. And we expect the rulers to be thoughtful and mindful of who they represent, and that is the people of their country, not themselves or their ruling elite.

War on Terror in Africa

Mr. Makori. Mr. President, on the area of terrorism, which parts of Africa do you consider the hotspots for terrorism, and what role is the U.S. playing, especially with the regional leaders, to ensure that you are achieving the desired result?

The President. Well, unfortunately, a hotspot now is your country, Kenya. And we're very closely working with the Government there. And I will tell you, the Kenyan Government is very strong when it comes to fighting terror. The best thing we can do is share intelligence, is to work closely with the intelligence services of a particular country and then, when we find information, provide that information and encourage the Government to act. And Kenya has done a good job of working with the United States to protect Kenya. And that's what we want. We want people to be able to defend themselves against terror.

And unfortunately, some terrorists have been—and this has all come to light recently—obviously, there was a bombing in Kenya, and now it looks like there may be some action there as well. But the Government is making some very strong moves.

Mr. Makori. Thank you very much, Mr. President.

The President. Vincent, thank you, sir.

NOTE: The interview was taped at 1:25 p.m. in the Map Room at the White House for later broadcast. In his remarks, the President referred to President Charles Taylor of Liberia and Secretary-General Kofi Annan of the United Nations. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this interview.

Interview With CNN International

July 3, 2003

Tomi Makagabo. Mr. President, thank you very much for speaking with us, and welcome to South Africa.

The President. Thanks. Thanks for having me.

Liberia

Ms. Makagabo. If we could begin with the issue of Liberia, President Charles Taylor in particular. You said he needs to step down; he needs to leave the country. The U.S., along with other west African countries, are busy negotiating the whole issue. What are the discussions and options that are being put on the table?

The President. Well, I'm glad you brought up the departure of Charles Taylor. In our judgment, he needs to go in order to create the conditions necessary for a peaceful solution to this difficult situation occurs.

You know, look, we're talking to ECOWAS countries right now to determine whether or not the—what the nature of a peacekeeping force might look like. I'm the kind of person that likes to know all the facts before I make a decision. We've got special ties to Liberia. There are historical ties to the United States. That's why we are involved in this issue, and I am going to look at all the options to determine how best to bring peace and stability.

One thing has to happen. That's Mr. Taylor needs to leave, and I've been outspoken on that. Mr. Colin Powell has been outspoken on that. And I think most of the people involved with this issue understand that that's important, that he do leave.

Ms. Makagabo. You said that he needs to leave. Does that mean that if those negotiations fail and President Charles Taylor refuses to go, that you will send troops to remove him from office and——

The President. Well, first of all, I refuse to accept the negative. I understand it's your job to try to put that forth. I believe he'll listen. And until he doesn't listen, then we can come back and talk about the issue. In other words, I hope he does listen, and I'm convinced he will listen.

Ms. Makagabo. And should he not?

The President. No, you—I'm convinced he will listen and make the decision—the right decision, if he cares about his country.

President's Upcoming Visit to Africa

Ms. Makagabo. Let's talk about, then, your trip to Africa. It hasn't necessarily—it has only recently become more apparent, this particular administration's interest in African affairs and involvement in what's going on in the country.

The President. Yes, can I stop you there? That's not true. As a matter of fact, from the very beginning of my administration, I've been very much involved with African affairs. I've met over 22 African leaders. And I just want to make—correct the record before——

Ms. Makagabo. Absolutely.

The President. ——disabuse you of that misinformation, because Africa has been a very important part of my administration's foreign policy.

Ms. Makagabo. However, many people will say that has only become more apparent to them, perhaps not necessarily to the administration, but more apparent, outwardly, that this administration is becoming involved in African affairs. My question to you, then, is if that is the case and looking at the history which you've pointed out, why now? Why this visit now?

The President. Why am I going now? I thought it was important to go before my first term was over to show the importance of Africa to my administration's foreign policy. And besides going on a trip—I mean, trips are fine, but what's more important is policy.

And I proposed a Millennium Challenge Account, which will, in my judgment, affect the lives of African citizens in an incredibly positive way, which says that in return for aid—and we're increasing the amount of aid available—governments actually have to make decisions which will be positive on behalf of their people, such as educating their people or providing health care for their people, not to steal the money. In other words, don't focus on elite but focus on the people themselves, create the conditions necessary for market growth.

I promoted AGOA. Now, I didn't invent AGOA; that happened in my predecessor's time. But I promoted the extension of AGOA, which was the trade agreements between the African Continent and the United States, which has been incredibly beneficial for a lot of countries and a lot of people on the African Continent.

I proposed an AIDS initiative because I believe it's very important for the United States to not only show its muscle to the world but also its heart. And the AIDS initiative, in our judgment, when implemented, will help affect the lives of thousands of people who are suffering from an incredibly—a pandemic that is actually destroying life. And it is—it's sad for us.

And so my administration is not only, you know, good on trips and meetings but more important, fundamental policy. And I think that's important.

Iraqi Weapons of Mass Destruction

Ms. Makagabo. One policy that your administration hasn't necessarily agreed on with many African countries is the question of Iraq and the war in Iraq. Can you give us a sense of how close the administration feels you are to finding those weapons of mass destruction and banned weapons?

The President. Oh, sure. Yes, there's no doubt in my mind he had a weapons program. He was—he used them. Remember, he was the guy that gassed his own people. Those were weapons of mass destruction he used on his own people. No doubt. We found

a biological lab, the very same lab that had been banned by the United Nations. It will be a matter of time.

Let me talk about Iraq, and I appreciate you bringing it up. If I think something that needs to be done to enhance the security of the American people, I'll do it. You see, that's my most important job, is to protect the security of America.

Secondly, I believe in freedom for people, and I suffer when I hear the stories of what took place inside of Iraq, the mass graves that have been discovered, the torture chambers, the jails for children. And the Iraqi people are going to benefit mightily from the actions of the United States and a lot of other nations, because they'll be free. And we've been there for about 90 days. And the world is such that they expect democracy to have occurred yesterday. It's going to take a while for a free, democratic Iraq to evolve. But it's going to happen. And history will show you what a—it will show you or the skeptics that we are actually correct in our assessment of Mr. Saddam Hussein.

Ms. Makagabo. All right, Mr. President. I think that's where I'm going to have to leave it.

The President. Thank you very much for coming. Hope to see you in South Africa.

NOTE: The interview was taped at 1:33 p.m. in the Map Room at the White House for later broadcast. In his remarks, the President referred to former President Saddam Hussein of Iraq. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this interview.

Statement on Signing the Strengthen AmeriCorps Program Act

July 3, 2003

Today I have signed into law S. 1276, the "Strengthen AmeriCorps Program Act." The Act clarifies the methods by which the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS) records obligations to the National Service Trust for volunteer educational awards by authorizing the use of estimating methodology similar to other comparable programs. In order to ensure appropriate accountability hereafter, the Act also provides for annual independent audits of the Trust.

Section 2(b)(2) of the Act purports to require the CNCS to consult the Director of the Congressional Budget Office (CBO), a legislative agent, in executing section 2(b)(1)(B) of the Act relating to determination of a formula for calculating certain obligations for recordation. Because section 191 of the National and Community Service Act of 1990 (NCSA) (42 U.S.C. 12651) assigns to the CNCS the Executive function to "administer the programs established under the national service laws," and because the CNCS is an "Executive agency" under section 105 of title 5 of the United States Code by virtue of the provisions of section 191 of the NCSA and section 103 of title 5, the CNCS is plainly part of the unitary executive branch.

Since a statute cannot constitutionally require the executive branch to involve a legislative agent in executive decision-making, the executive branch shall construe section 2(b)(2) as requiring the CNCS only to notify the Director of the CBO with regard to the matters addressed by the provision. At the same time, the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the CNCS shall, as a matter of comity between the executive and legislative branches, seek and consider the views of the Director of CBO in this matter as the CEO deems appropriate.

George W. Bush

The White House,
July 3, 2003.

NOTE: S. 1276, approved July 3, was assigned Public Law No. 108–45.

Message on the Observance of Independence Day, 2003

July 3, 2003

On July 4, 1776, our Founders adopted the Declaration of Independence, creating a great Nation and establishing a hopeful vision of liberty and equality that endures today. This Independence Day, we express gratitude for our many blessings and we celebrate the ideals of freedom and opportunity that our Nation holds dear.