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Editor's Note: The President was at Camp David, MD, on February 27, the closing date of this issue. Releases and announcements issued by the Office of the Press Secretary but not received in time for inclusion in this issue will be printed next week.

WEEKLY COMPILATION OF

PRESIDENTIAL DOCUMENTS

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Notice—Notice of Intention To Enter Into a Free Trade Agreement With Costa Rica, El Salvador, Honduras, Guatemala, and Nicaragua (the "CAFTA Countries")

February 20, 2004

Consistent with section 2105(a)(1)(A) of the Trade Act of 2002, I have notified the Congress of my intention to enter into a Free Trade Agreement with the Governments of the CAFTA countries.

Consistent with section 2105(a)(1)(A) of that Act, this notice shall be published in the *Federal Register.*

George W. Bush

The White House,
February 20, 2004.

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 8:49 a.m., February 23, 2004]

NOTE: This notice was published in the *Federal Register* on February 24. This item was not received in time for publication in the appropriate issue.

Letter to Congressional Leaders Transmitting a Notice of Intention To Enter Into a Free Trade Agreement With Costa Rica, El Salvador, Honduras, Guatemala, and Nicaragua

February 20, 2004

Dear Mr. Speaker: (Dear Mr. President:)

In accordance with section 2105(a)(1)(A) of the Trade Act of 2002 (the "Trade Act"), I am pleased to notify the Congress of my intent to enter into a Free Trade Agreement (FTA) with the Governments of Costa Rica, El Salvador, Honduras, Guatemala, and Nicaragua (hereinafter "Central America").

This agreement will create new opportunities for America's workers, farmers, businesses, and consumers by eliminating barriers in trade with Central America. Our Central American partners have made dramatic progress in transitioning from countries wracked by civil war to peaceful, democratic societies. This agreement will write a new page of our history with Central America—one that depicts sustained engagement in support of democracy, peaceful regional integration, economic opportunity, and hope. This agreement is part of a broader strategy that my Administration is pursuing to expand economic opportunities and to promote economic growth and prosperity. We are also moving forward with negotiations to integrate the Dominican Republic in our FTA with Central America.

Consistent with the Trade Act, I am sending this notification at least 90 days in advance of signing the United States-Central America FTA. My Administration looks forward to working with the Congress to develop appropriate legislation to approve and implement an historic free trade agreement with Central America.

Sincerely,

George W. Bush

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to J. Dennis Hastert, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Richard B. Cheney, President of the Senate. This item was not received in time for publication in the appropriate issue.

The President's Radio Address

February 21, 2004

Good morning. This week, I traveled to Fort Polk in Louisiana to visit with soldiers and family members who are giving vital service in the war on terror. Fort Polk is home to some of the Army's oldest and finest units. Since September the 11th, 2001, Fort Polk has trained and deployed more than 10,000 troops to fight the terrorist enemy worldwide, including in Afghanistan and

Iraq. Thanks to their bravery and skill, America is waging this fight with focus and determination.

Over the last 29 months, many terrorists have learned the meaning of justice. Nearly two-thirds of Al Qaida's known leaders have been captured or killed. The terrorists are on the run, with good reason to fear what the night might bring. Success in the war on terror also requires that we confront regimes that might arm terrorists with the ultimate weapons. America is determined to meet this danger and to deny terrorists and dangerous regimes the ability to threaten us with the world's most deadly weapons.

For 12 years, the former dictator of Iraq defied the international community. He refused to disarm or account for his illegal weapons and programs. My administration looked at the intelligence information, and we saw a threat. Members of Congress looked at the intelligence, and they saw a threat. The United Nations Security Council looked at the intelligence, and it saw a threat. All of us knew Saddam Hussein's history. He waged aggressive wars against neighboring countries and inspired to dominate the Middle East. He cultivated ties to terrorists. He built weapons of mass destruction. He hid those weapons. And he used chemical weapons against thousands of Iraqis and Iranians. Saddam Hussein doubted our resolve to enforce our word. Now he sits in a prison cell while his country moves toward a democratic future.

Today in Iraq, our coalition faces deadly attacks from a remnant of Saddam's supporters joined by foreign terrorists. Recently we intercepted a letter sent by a senior Al Qaida associate named Zarqawi to one of Usama bin Laden's top lieutenants. The letter describes a terrorist strategy, to tear Iraq apart with ethnic violence, to undermine Iraqi security forces, to demoralize our coalition, and to prevent the rise of a sovereign, democratic government. This terrorist outlines his efforts to recruit and train suicide bombers and boasts of 25 attacks on innocent Iraqis and coalition personnel. And he urges Al Qaida members to join him in waging war on our coalition and on the people of Iraq.

Zarqawi and men like him have made Iraq the central front in our war on terror. The terrorists know that the emergence of a free Iraq will be a major blow against the worldwide terrorist movement. In this, they are correct.

But we have seen this enemy before, and we know how to deal with them. Fighting alongside the people of Afghanistan, we are defeating the terrorists in that country, and fighting alongside the people of Iraq, we will defeat the terrorists there as well. Iraq, like Afghanistan, will be free.

Our coalition is working with Iraq's Governing Council to draft a basic law with a bill of rights. We're working with Iraqis and the United Nations to prepare for a transition to full Iraqi sovereignty. The establishment of a free Iraq will be a watershed event in the history of the Middle East, helping to advance the spread of liberty throughout that vital region. And as freedom takes hold in the greater Middle East, the people of the region will find new hope, and America will be more secure.

Two-and-a-half years ago, on a clear September morning, the enemies of America brought a new kind of war to our shores. Three days later, I stood in the rubble of the Twin Towers. My resolve today is the same as it was then: I will not relent until the terrorist threat to America is removed.

Thank you for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 11:35 a.m. on February 20 in the Cabinet Room at the White House for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on February 21. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on February 20 but was embargoed for release until the broadcast. In his remarks, the President referred to Usama bin Laden, leader of the Al Qaida terrorist organization; and senior Al Qaida associate Abu Musab Al Zarqawi. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of this address.

Remarks at a Dinner for the Nation's Governors

February 22, 2004

Good evening. Welcome to the White House. Laura and I are honored to host so many of our friends and new acquaintances. The Nation's Governors were the guests at our first official state dinner almost 3 years

ago today. It's great to see so many of those same Governors with us tonight. It's kind of like being with members of your family. Right, Jeb? [*Laughter*]

I appreciate the fact that the Vice President is with us. I oftentimes say Dick Cheney is the finest Vice President our country has ever had. Mother always says, "Wait a minute." [*Laughter*] I want to thank the former Governors who are in my Cabinet, Tommy Thompson and John Ashcroft, Tom Ridge, who is not with us tonight, and the newest member of my Cabinet, Mike Leavitt.

I want to welcome the Nation's new Governors, Barbour and Fletcher, Kernan, Blanco, Walker, Tulafono, and Schwarzenegger. [*Laughter*] Last time I was with Governor Schwarzenegger, it dawned on me that we have some things in common. We both married well. [*Laughter*] We both have trouble with the English language. [*Laughter*] We both have big biceps. [*Laughter*] Well, two out of the three. [*Laughter*]

In the past 3 years, our country has faced some great challenges. We're still at war. The war on terror is a new kind of war in which every American is threatened and every level of government must work together. We've taken vital steps to secure our homeland, and I want to thank the Governors for their hard work. I'm going to continue to work with you to fulfill our solemn duty to protect the American people.

We share responsibility as well to enhance the entrepreneurial spirit so that our economy continues to grow and people can find work; work together to make sure Americans can gain affordable access to health care; to make sure every child learns to read and write and add and subtract. We've made good progress. We'll continue to meet our obligations in future years.

I've got great confidence in America because I believe in the strength of the American people. I've got great confidence in our Nation's Governors because you represent your State's highest ideals and you hold your people's trust.

It's a pleasure to host you all here. And now I'd like you all to join me in a toast to the Governors of the United States.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8:12 p.m. in the State Dining Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Gov. Jeb Bush of Florida; Gov. Haley Barbour of Mississippi; Gov. Ernie Fletcher of Kentucky; Gov. Joseph E. Kernan of Indiana; Gov. Kathleen Babineaux Blanco of Louisiana; Gov. Olene S. Walker of Utah; Gov. Togiola Tulafono of American Samoa; and Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger of California.

Remarks to the National Governors Association Conference

February 23, 2004

Well, that's it? Okay. [*Laughter*] Always love to get a short introduction. Hope you all cleaned the room up after last night. [*Laughter*] Laura and I really enjoyed that. Thanks for coming. It was a lot of fun. Everybody seemed pretty well behaved. I don't know about Coach, but yes, I know, it's hard to take him out.

I'm glad members of my Cabinet are here. Obviously, the more communications we can have about issues that worry you, the easier it is for us to solve problems. Governors are problem-solvers, and so is the President. Our jobs are to identify problems and deal with them, and the best way to do so is in the spirit of cooperation.

That's sometimes hard in Washington, I readily concede. This is not a town that thrives upon cooperation, like most State capitals. But we'll continue to work hard to help you, because by helping our Governors, we really help our people. That's the job of a President.

Yesterday in my toast, I said the war on terror goes on, and it does. I wish I could report otherwise, but that's not a true assessment of the world. We are chasing Al Qaida. We're dealing with rogue nations and proliferation, but the war still goes on. And as a fellow Commander in Chief, it's important for you to know that. And therefore, it's essential that we continue to cooperate on matters of homeland security.

We'll have a robust budget in front of the Congress, and we expect it to be passed. Tom, evidently, has met with you all to talk about ways to make sure that the flow of money is expedited from the Federal Government to the State Governments to the

local governments. And that's essential. And I appreciate that he has convened a conference of Governors and mayors and local responders to make sure that we all do our jobs well. That's the purpose of the meeting.

I will tell you, the response to emergency and/or threats has been, from my perspective, really good. Governor Easley and Governor Warner of Virginia had to suffer through a devastating act of nature. But the response between the Federal Government and the State Governments and the local governments was more seamless than ever, and I want to thank the Governors and their offices of emergency preparedness.

Ridge is doing a good job, from my perspective. He's taken on a tough assignment. I see Governor Rendell is nodding his head. You trained him well. But he's taken on a tough assignment, to bring together diverse agencies under one roof and have it function smoothly, not only here in Washington but in the field. And we'll continue to work and make sure that the Office of Homeland Security enables you to do your job better.

There's talk about the PATRIOT Act. Let me just tell you it needs to be renewed, and I'll tell you why. Prior to the PATRIOT Act, the CIA and the FBI couldn't communicate on matters of intelligence. And yet, we're fighting a war against individuals and killers that can hide in our communities, hide in dark parts of the world, hide in caves, and we need to be able to communicate. It makes no sense not to have the tools available to chase these terrorists down. So you'll see me actively pursuing renewal of the PATRIOT Act, so not only can we do our job, the Federal Government, but people in the State and local level can too—do so as well.

The Joint Terrorism Task Force in your community require cooperation—interagency cooperation. It's essential they have the tools necessary to find these people and bring them to justice. That is our solemn call in this, the beginning of the 21st century. After all, the most important job of anybody in office is to protect the people of our country, which means we got to stay on the offense when it comes to dealing with Al Qaida, and we got to be wise about dealing with threats before they become imminent or fully materialize. That's the—to me, those are the lessons of September the 11th, 2001. It changed the calculation as to how you analyze and deal with threat.

We are on the hunt for Al Qaida. You just got to know that there's a lot of brave people searching them out. And I view the hunt for Al Qaida as part of the war on terror. And it requires all assets, intelligence assets and military assets, to chase them down and bring them to justice. And we're doing pretty good—better than pretty good. If Al Qaida were a corporation, middle management has been brought to justice. And that's important for you to know. We can take comfort about the progress we're making. But we've got a lot more to do, and so we'll just stay on the hunt here in—out of Washington, DC.

As you know, I laid out some doctrine that said, "If you harbor a terrorist, you're just as guilty as the terrorist." And it's very important for the administration to follow through when they say something. It makes diplomacy a little easier when your word means something, and in Al Qaida, our word meant something. The Taliban is no longer in power. We've still got work there to do, but the country is now more free than ever before.

You ought to see the movie "Osama." It's an interesting movie. It talks about what it was like to be a woman in Afghanistan during the Taliban era. It will give you a perspective about what it means to be a Governor in a nation which is willing to sacrifice not only for its own security but for the freedom of others. When you hear talk about being a liberator, that movie will bring home what it means to be liberated from the clutches of barbarism.

A lot of my foreign policy is driven by the fact that I truly believe that freedom is a gift from the Almighty to every person and that America has a responsibility to take a lead in the world, to help people be free. And we're making progress in Afghanistan. We really are. Just look at the fact that young girls are now going to school for the first time in a long period of time.

Secretary Rumsfeld's wife and Karen Hughes and Margaret Spellings, who is my Domestic Policy Advisor—they're on a plane right now heading to Afghanistan to continue the progress toward a more free society.

And in Iraq, obviously, I made a tough choice. But my attitude is, is that the lessons of September the 11th mean that we must be clear-eyed and realistic and deal with threats before they fully materialize. I looked at the intelligence and came to the conclusion that Saddam was a threat. The Congress looked at the same intelligence, and it came to the conclusion that Saddam Hussein was a threat. The United Nations Security Council looked at the intelligence, and it concluded that Saddam Hussein was a threat. My predecessor and his administration looked at the same intelligence and concluded that Saddam Hussein was a threat, and that's why Congress passed a—resolved to remove Saddam from power, that regime change was a—was policy for the Government.

And there's a reason why not only did the intelligence say that he was a threat, his actions said he was a threat. He had used weapons of mass destruction on his own people. He hid weapons of mass destruction from inspectors. In other words, he wouldn't be open. The United Nations Security Council, at my request, took a look at the issue one last time and unanimously voted to have Saddam reveal, disclose, and destroy weapons of mass destruction and/or weapons of mass destruction programs and, if not, face serious consequences.

September the 11th affected my way of thinking when it came to the security of the country. We saw a danger, and so I gave him an ultimatum. The world, really, gave him an ultimatum. And he refused. And rather than take the word of a madman whose actions had proven unworthy of leadership, we acted, and we removed him. And the world is better off for it, in my judgment.

It is essential we succeed in Iraq, just like it's essential we succeed in Afghanistan. A free Iraq is an historic opportunity to help change the world. And I want to thank the Governors for going to Iraq. I want to thank you for taking the risk to go and to say thanks to the troops on the ground, whether they be your Guard's troops or reservists or whether they be active duty personnel.

We can debate all day long about whether or not I made the right decision, but what is not in question is the bravery and skill of our troops. And I want to thank you for your support—support for people who are serving a cause greater than themselves, people who are willing to sacrifice not only for our own security but people who when, by and large, when you talk to them, understand that the long-term consequences of a free Iraq will make us more secure.

Some of the stories from Iraq are amazing stories. Just ask your Governors to account for what they saw and heard. It's important for you to know that we fully recognize there needs to be certainty in troop rotation, that we're asking families and troops to go serve the country, and there needs to be a certain timeframe. It's important for you to know that our troops will get the best equipment and best possible training.

I went to Fort Polk in Louisiana, and they showed me some of the training missions that our Guard units are going through, particularly the Guard unit out of Arkansas—Huckabee. And the training is very good. It is intense. It is realistic. It is preparing these souls for duty. And again, I want to thank you, as Commander in Chief, for understanding the mission.

See, the danger is, is that the Iraqi people think we'll cut and run. That's what they're worried about. I think if you ask the Governors, they'll tell you they heard that same sentiment. We're not going to cut and run. We've got to make it clear we're there to succeed, and we will.

And they're making progress on the ground. I don't think it's all that bad that people are arguing about the nature of government. It's a pretty good sign. We argue about government all the time here. As a matter of fact, later on this year, we'll be having a pretty good argument about government. [*Laughter*] But it's a good sign in Iraq. That's part of the process of heading for a society in which minority rights are recognized and human dignity is paramount. Again, I'll repeat to you, I view this as an historic moment. I truly believe that a free Iraq is going to change the world for the better.

I had a dinner with Koizumi—Prime Minister Koizumi in Tokyo, and we were eating Kobe beef, which is quite good, I might add. And we were talking about, of all things,

North Korea, how best, as friends, to deal with North Korea. It dawned on me in the midst of that conversation, what would it have been like if we'd blown the peace with Japan. Would I have ever—or any American President ever been sitting down with a Prime Minister talking about how to deal with the current threat, for the common good?

During the course of the conversation, I also realized that 50 years from now, when we get it right in Iraq, some American President will be sitting down with the leader of Iraq, talking about the common good, how to maintain the peace, how to create a more hopeful society. This is an historic opportunity, and this country will not flinch from the hard duty ahead of us.

At home, obviously, the economy and jobs are on my mind. I know they're on yours as well. I'm pleased that the economy is growing; 5.6 percent unemployment is a good national number. It's not good enough, but it's a good number, particularly since what we've been through, which has been a recession, an emergency, and corporate scandal and war. And yet, the economy is growing, which is a good sign.

My view of government is to create an environment that is good for the entrepreneur, that encourages capital formation, particularly among small businesses. The tax relief we passed not only put more money into the pockets of individuals, which I believe is good when you're trying to come out of a recession, but it also helps small businesses. Remember, most small businesses in your States are sole proprietorships or Subchapter S corporations. That's a fact, and when you cut income taxes, all taxes, not a few but all, you're providing additional capital for Subchapter S and sole proprietorships.

And if you're worried about job growth, it seems like it makes sense to give a little fuel to those who create jobs, the small-business sector. So I'll vigorously defend the permanency of the tax cuts, not only for the sake of the economy but for the sake of the entrepreneurial spirit, which is important in your States. It's important that people have got incentive to create jobs. Not only is it good for those people looking for work, it's good for the soul of the country for people to own something. We want us to be an ownership society in America.

There's more to do. We need an energy bill. We'll try to get one out of the Congress here. We need tort reform, it seems like to me. We need tort reform for class action; we need tort reform for asbestos. We need medical—national medical liability reform in order to help control the rising cost of health care, associated health care plans. I hope you support these. These are opportunities for small businesses to pool risk in order to better control the cost of health. That's where the focus ought to be, how best to address the rising cost of health care. And this administration will continue to do so for the sake of jobs—less regulations, obviously.

We won't back off our desire to open up markets for U.S. products—farm products, ranch products, manufacturing products. It's pretty easy to trade into America. What's hard is for Americans to trade into other countries. And so it's important for the administration to continue to focus on trade and the benefits of trade here at home.

And I mentioned the permanency of the tax cuts. It's very important for people who are planning for the future to have—wonder about tax relief, whether it will be there. It's essential that there be certainty in the Tax Code.

We also recognize that these are changing times. The economy is changing. People go to work in different ways. And therefore, the policy ought to reflect that. The policy ought to reflect it through health care, where people have got more control over their health care decisions. Health savings accounts are one such way to do that.

The education system is vital. However, as the economy changes, people have got to be prepared to work in the changing economy. I'm going to vigorously defend No Child Left Behind because I know in my heart of hearts it's the absolute right role for the Federal Government to provide money but insist upon results, to say for the first time, "Would you please show us whether or not the children are learning to read and write and add and subtract." And if not, there will be special help to make sure they do. And if so, there will be ample praise.

You design the accountability. I know Rod talked to you about flexibility and how we get to the numbers, which is good. Accountability isn't meant to punish anybody. Accountability systems are meant to help determine whether curriculum are working, whether or not the strategy is working and whether or not people are being just shuffled through from grade to grade without concern as to whether or not they can read or write. That's what this is all about, and I look forward to working with you to make sure the system works well. And I just can assure you this is—there will be a vigorous defense of what I think is the one of the most constructive reforms in education policy at the Federal Government ever.

We have put out some policies to encourage reading and math, a program for high school students who are falling behind, additional money for advanced placement for low-income schools, increasing—larger Pell grants for students who prepare for college by taking more rigorous courses. And of course, I've always felt that the community college system provides a great opportunity for job training. Elaine will talk about that to you. Community colleges are available, affordable; they're flexible. We don't need to be training 500 hairdressers for 50 jobs which exist. The system ought to be designed toward meeting the demand of your employers, and a good community college system will make it much easier for Governors and mayors to attract jobs to your communities. And I know a lot of you have used your community college system wisely.

Governor Napolitano—I was in Arizona, went to the Mesa Community College System. It's a fine community college system. One of the interesting stories there, a lady who worked for 15 years as a graphic design artist, and she went to the community college system to help get the skills necessary to become a viable employee in the high-tech world. And her starting pay—I believe it's called Cable One—was higher than her 15th year as a graphic artist, because she took time, with Government help—I think a Pell grant in her case—to become reeducated. So we've got money in our budget to help invigorate the community college system.

Another issue that I think we need to work on—I know we need to work on is welfare. They need to reauthorize welfare. I hope the Congress will reauthorize welfare. Welfare reform had worked. You need to have certainty as you plan your—on how to help people become less dependent on government, and we need a welfare reform bill. And we'll push it, here in Washington.

And finally, the Faith-Based Initiative—I want to talk a little bit about that. My attitude is, if a program works, let's use it. If a program can help save somebody's life, it seems like to me that program ought to be allowed to access monies aimed at helping people help themselves. And yet, that's not the way it was here in Washington. Faith-based programs were discriminated against. There was a process argument, and Governors are results-oriented people, and so am I. And it seems like to me, you ought have the flexibility, and people at your grassroots level ought to have the flexibility to access taxpayers' money if they're able to meet common objectives. Now—and so—well, I couldn't get the bill out of the Congress, so I just signed an Executive order which opened up Federal grant money to faith-based groups on a competitive basis.

We're also making sure that our bureaucracies don't say to faith-based groups, "You can't be a faith-based group." If faith is part of being an effective program, it doesn't make sense to say to somebody, you can't practice your faith. And so we recognize, here in Washington, faith-based programs are a two-way street—one, there's a Federal interface, and two, that sometimes can be frightening to people of faith. And by the way, I'm talking about all faiths. This isn't just a single faith. It's Christian, Jewish, Muslim faiths, all of which exist because they've heard the universal admonition to love a neighbor like you'd like to be loved yourself.

And so I want to applaud those of you who have set up faith-based offices and encourage you, if you haven't, to do so. There is a lot of Federal money available to effective providers of social services. One such program is going to be the $100-million drug treatment programs, where now vouchers can be issued to people where they can choose where they go, whether it be kind of a clinical

program or a program designed to help change somebody's heart. By the way, if your heart gets changed, it's a lot easier to quit drinking. I know. And so it's—so this is an opportunity that I think is a viable opportunity for Governors and States to really help people. And that's why we're in office, isn't it, is to do the best—[*applause*].

So regardless of your party, I hope you have this sense of optimism I do. You see the people in your States—we are lucky to be leaders in such a fabulous country, we really are—good, honest, decent, honorable people. We've overcome a lot. There's more to do. There's a lot we can do together. So thanks for coming by the White House.

That's my pledge. This is going to be a year in which a lot of people are probably going to think nothing can done, right, because we're all out campaigning. Well, that's not my attitude. I fully understand it's going to be the year of the sharp elbow and the quick tongue. But my pledge to you is, we'll continue to work with you. You've got what you—you've got to do what you've got to do in your home States, in terms of politics. But surely we can shuffle that aside sometimes and focus on our people, do what you were elected to do and what I was elected to do to make this country hopeful.

So thanks for coming by. I'll be glad to answer a couple of questions.

You're out of here.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:20 a.m. in the State Dining Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Secretary of Homeland Security Tom Ridge; Gov. Michael F. Easley of North Carolina; Gov. Mark R. Warner of Virginia; Joyce Rumsfeld, wife of Secretary of Defense Donald H. Rumsfeld; Karen Hughes, former Counselor to the President; Margaret Spellings, Assistant to the President for Domestic Policy; former President Saddam Hussein of Iraq; Gov. Mike Huckabee of Arkansas; Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi of Japan; Secretary of Labor Elaine L. Chao; and Gov. Janet Napolitano of Arizona. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of these remarks.

Memorandum on Delegation of Certain Authority Under the United States Leadership Against HIV/AIDS, Tuberculosis, and Malaria Act of 2003

February 23, 2004

Memorandum for the Secretary of State

Subject: Delegation of Certain Authority Under the United States Leadership Against HIV/AIDS, Tuberculosis, and Malaria Act of 2003

By the authority vested in me as President by the Constitution and the laws of the United States, including section 301 of title 3, United States Code, I hereby delegate to you the functions and authority conferred upon the President by sections 202(c), 305, and 313 of the United States Leadership Against HIV/AIDS, Tuberculosis, and Malaria Act of 2003 (Public Law 108–25), to provide the specified reports to the Congress. In addition, I delegate to you the authority vested in the President by section 101 of Public Law 108–25 to establish a comprehensive, integrated, 5-year strategy to combat global HIV/AIDS and to submit to the appropriate congressional committees a report setting forth the strategy.

You are authorized and directed to publish this memorandum in the *Federal Register*.

George W. Bush

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 9:20 a.m., February 26, 2004]

NOTE: This memorandum was published in the *Federal Register* on February 27.

Message to the Senate Transmitting the United Nations Convention Against Transnational Organized Crime and Two Supplementary Protocols

February 23, 2003

To the Senate of the United States:

With a view to receiving the advice and consent of the Senate to ratification, I transmit herewith the United Nations Convention Against Transnational Organized Crime (the "Convention"), as well as two supplementary protocols: (1) the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress, and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, and (2) the Protocol Against Smuggling of Migrants by Land, Sea and Air, which were adopted by the United Nations General Assembly on November 15, 2000. The Convention and Protocols were signed by the United States on December 13, 2000, at Palermo, Italy.

Accompanying the Convention and Protocols are interpretative notes for the official records (or "travaux preparatoires") that were prepared by the Secretariat of the Ad Hoc Committee that conducted the negotiations, based on discussions that took place throughout the process of negotiations. These notes are being submitted to the Senate for information purposes. I also transmit the report of the Department of State with respect to the Convention and Protocols.

The Convention and Protocols are the first multilateral treaties to address the phenomenon of transnational organized crime. Their provisions are explained in the accompanying report of the Department of State. The report also sets forth proposed reservations and understandings that would be deposited by the United States with its instruments of ratification. With these reservations and understandings, the Convention and Protocols will not require implementing legislation for the United States.

The Convention and Protocols will be effective tools to assist in the global effort to combat transnational organized crime in its many forms, such as trafficking and smuggling of persons. They provide for a broad range of cooperation, including extradition, mutual legal assistance, and measures regarding property, in relation to serious crimes committed by an organized group that has a transnational element.

The Convention also imposes on the States Parties an obligation to criminalize, if they have not already done so, certain types of conduct characteristic of transnational organized crime. For the Convention, these are: participation in an organized criminal group (i.e., conspiracy), money laundering, bribery of domestic public officials, and obstruction of justice. The Protocols require parties to criminalize trafficking in persons and smuggling of migrants. These provisions will serve to create a global criminal law standard for these offenses, several of which (e.g., trafficking in persons) currently are not criminal in many countries. The Trafficking Protocol also includes important provisions regarding assistance to and protection of victims of trafficking.

I recommend that the Senate give early and favorable consideration to the Convention and Protocols, and that it give its advice and consent to ratification, subject to the reservations and understandings described in the accompanying report of the Department of State.

George W. Bush

The White House,
February 23, 2004.

Remarks to the Republican Governors Association

February 23, 2004

Thank you all very much. It is always an honor to welcome fellow Governors to Washington, DC. I'm a proud former member of the RGA. And tonight we're proud to welcome the newest members of this growing organization, Olene, Ernie, Haley, and Arnold. The Governor of California is new to politics, so he's still getting used to all the cameras and lights. [*Laughter*] I used to think the coolest Governor was from Florida. [*Laughter*]

The most distinguished former member of the RGA is a predecessor of Governor Schwarzenegger and a predecessor of mine. President Ronald Reagan had his 93d birthday this month, and tonight we want Nancy and his family to know we are thinking of

this great American. Ronald Reagan's leadership revived America's economy, renewed America's strength, and lifted America's confidence. And that spirit of optimism and faith in fundamental American values is the spirit we will carry to victory in November of 2004.

I married really well. [*Laughter*] I am so honored—I appreciate you coming tonight, Laura. She's a great First Lady for our country. I'm really proud of the job she's doing.

I want to thank my friend Bob Taft for being the chairman of this august group. I appreciate Kenny Guinn from Nevada for being the vice chairman. I thank Governor Mitt Romney of Massachusetts for hosting this reception. I want to thank all the other Republican Governors who are here. I'm proud to call you friend.

I want to thank all of you who are here to support these Governors. They're making a significant difference in their States. They bring such optimism and hope. I appreciate the members of my Cabinet who are here.

I also want to acknowledge a man who is not here. Vice President Dick Cheney spent the day campaigning in Minneapolis and Wichita, but he's recently completed another important assignment. Once again I put him in charge of my Vice Presidential search committee. [*Laughter*] He tells me he's reviewed all the candidates, and he's come back with the same recommendation as last time. [*Laughter*] In fact, I made the choice myself, after I had taken the measure of this man. They don't come any better, and I am proud to have Dick Cheney by my side.

We meet during the Presidential primary season. We're witnessing a clear trend. It looks like we have a winner in the Republican primaries. [*Laughter*] The other party's nomination battle is still playing out. The candidates are an interesting group with diverse opinions: For tax cuts and against them; for NAFTA and against NAFTA; for the PATRIOT Act and against the PATRIOT Act; in favor of liberating Iraq and opposed to it. And that's just one Senator from Massachusetts.

The other party is still not finished selecting its nominee. Yet this much is already certain: Come November, the voters are going to have a very clear choice. It's a choice between keeping the tax relief that is moving the economy forward or putting the burden of higher taxes back on the American people. It is a choice between an America that leads the world with strength and confidence or an America that is uncertain in the face of danger. The American people will decide between two visions of Government, a Government that encourages ownership and opportunity and responsibility or a Government that takes your money and makes your choices. I will set these alternatives squarely before the American people in a spirited campaign. I look forward to the contest.

We have a record of historic achievement. And most important, we have a positive vision for the years ahead, for winning the war against terror, for extending peace and freedom and creating jobs and opportunity here at home. We'll leave no doubt where we stand, and we will win our second term in November.

The last 3 years have brought serious challenges. We've given serious answers and the strong leadership these times of extraordinary change demand. We came to office with an economy heading into recession. We delivered historic tax relief, and the consumer spending and investment that resulted helped lift our economy back to growth so that people are getting hired again. At a time when competition is not just across town but across borders and continents, America's productive workers have made this economy the fastest growing of any major industrialized nation.

We had to confront corporate crimes that cost people jobs and savings. So we passed the strongest corporate reforms since Franklin Roosevelt and made it clear that we will not tolerate dishonesty in the boardrooms of America.

We saw war and grief arrive on a quiet September morning, and from that day to this, we have pursued terrorists across the world. We've captured or killed many of the key leaders of the Al Qaida network, and the rest of them know we're on their trail. There is no cave or hole deep enough to hide them.

We confronted the dangers of state-sponsored terror and the spread of weapons of mass destruction. We have used the power of this country to end forever two of the most violent and dangerous regimes on Earth.

More than 50 million people in Afghanistan and Iraq are reclaiming the rights and dignity of free men and women, and America has been proud, once again, to lead the armies of liberation.

When Dick Cheney and I came to Washington, we found a military that was underfunded and underappreciated. So we increased the defense budget to give our men and women the tools and training they need to win the war on terror. And today, no one in the world can question the skill, the strength, and the spirit of the United States military.

We learned that on September the 11th, our homeland is no longer protected by vast oceans. So we reorganized our Government and created the Department of Homeland Security to safeguard the ports and borders and to better protect the American people.

When we came to office, people in this city had gotten used to gridlock. Old problems were used to score points. Old problems were politicized, debated, and just passed on from year to year. We didn't come here to this Nation's Capital to do things the Washington way. We chose to lead and to get things done. We passed major reforms to raise the standards of public schools. We passed reforms in Medicare to give prescription drugs and choice to our seniors. We're showing that with big goals and clear principles, you can get past old differences and make progress for all of the American citizens.

It's the President's job to confront problems, not to pass them on to future Presidents and future generations. It's the President's job to seize opportunities and not let them slip away. A President needs to step up and make the hard decisions and keep his commitments, and that is how I will continue to lead our country.

Great events will turn on this election. The man who sits in the Oval Office will set the course of the war on terror and the direction of our economy. The security and prosperity of America are at stake. Our course is clear.

In the next 4 years, we'll keep our enemies on the run and extend the frontiers of liberty. In the next 4 years, we'll help more Americans to find that there are opportunities in a changing economy. In the next 4 years, we will stand for the values that make us a good and decent country.

Our opponents have not offered much in the way of strategies to win the war or policies to expand our economy. So far, all we hear is a lot of old bitterness and partisan anger. Anger is not an agenda for the future of America. We're taking on the big issues with strength and resolve and determination, and we stand ready to lead this Nation for the next 4 years.

A big issue for every family in America is the Federal tax burden. With the largest tax relief since Ronald Reagan was President, we have left more money in the hands of those who earned it. By saving and spending and investing and to help create new jobs, the American people have used their money far better than the Federal Government would have.

Our opponents have their own plan for these tax cuts. They plan to take them away. They will use that money to expand the Federal Government. I have a better idea. To keep this economy growing, we will have fiscal discipline in Washington, DC. To keep this economy going, the tax cuts must be permanent.

We must do more to keep this economy growing. We need to protect small-business owners and employees from frivolous lawsuits and needless regulation. We need to control the costs of health care by passing medical liability reform. No one has ever been healed by a frivolous lawsuit. We need to pass sound energy legislation to modernize our electricity system and to make America less dependent on foreign sources of oil.

Our opponents talk about job creation, but they're against every one of these job-creating measures. Empty talk about jobs won't get anybody hired. The way to create jobs is our pro-growth, pro-entrepreneur, pro-small-business owner agenda.

This economy of ours is going through a time of challenge and change. In the new economy, many workers change jobs several times or start their own businesses or work out of their homes as contractors. They often don't have pensions or health care through their jobs. Many have had to learn new skills. It's our responsibility to help people gain the

skills and security to make a good living and to look forward to their retirement.

All skills start with education. My administration has put education at the top of the agenda. We passed the No Child Left Behind Act, a good law that is bringing higher standards and accountability to every public school in America. We have a plan to help high school students who fall behind in reading and math. We have a plan to help community colleges train workers for the industries that are creating the most new jobs. We are strongly committed to education because we believe everyone in America should have a chance to learn and to succeed and to realize the great promise of our country.

My administration understands the importance of ownership in our society. We've set a great goal: We want every worker in America to become a saver and an owner. And we have an agenda to meet this goal. We'll help more people of every background to own their homes and build their own savings. We'll encourage more people to own their own small businesses. We'll help more people to own their own health care plans. We want younger workers to own and manage their own retirement under Social Security, so that one day every worker can have the security of a personal account. When people have solid assets to call their own, they gain independence and security and dignity and more control over their future. I believe in private property so much, I want everyone in America to have some.

On issue after issue, the American people have a clear choice. Our opponents are against personal retirement accounts, against putting patients in charge of Medicare, against tax relief. They seem to be against every idea that gives Americans more authority and more choices and more control over their own lives. We'll hear them make a lot of promises over the next eight months, and listen closely, because there's a theme. Every promise will increase the power of politicians and bureaucrats over your income, over your retirement, over your health care, and over your life. It's the same old Washington mindset. They'll give the orders, and you'll pay the bills. I've got news for them. America has gone beyond that way of thinking, and we're not going back. I trust the people, not Washington politicians, to make the best decisions for their own money, their own health, their own retirement, and their own lives.

Our future also depends on America's leadership in this world. The momentum of freedom in our time is strong, but we still face serious challenges. Al Qaida is wounded but not broken. Terrorists are testing our will in Afghanistan and Iraq. Regimes in North Korea and Iran are challenging the peace. The actions we take and the decisions we make in this decade will have consequences far into this century. If America shows weakness and uncertainty, the world will drift toward tragedy. That will not happen on my watch. This Nation is strong and confident in the cause of freedom, and no friend or enemy today doubts the word of the United States.

America and our allies gave an ultimatum to the terror regime in Afghanistan. The Taliban chose defiance, and the Taliban are no longer in power. America and our allies gave an ultimatum to the terror regime in Iraq. The dictator chose defiance, and now the dictator sits in a prison cell.

September the 11th, 2001, taught a lesson I have not forgotten. America must confront threats before they fully materialize. In Iraq, my administration looked at the intelligence and saw a danger. Members of Congress looked at the intelligence, and they saw a danger. The United Nations Security Council looked at the intelligence, and it saw a danger. The previous administration and Congress looked at the intelligence and made regime change in Iraq the policy of our country. We all knew Saddam's history well. He waged aggressive wars against neighboring countries and aspired to dominate the Middle East. He cultivated ties to terrorists. He built weapons of mass destruction. He hid those weapons. He used chemical weapons against thousands of Iraqis and Iranians.

In 2002, the United Nations Security Council yet again demanded a full accounting of Saddam Hussein's weapons programs. As he had for over a decade, Saddam Hussein refused to comply. So we had a choice to make: Either take the word of a madman or take action to defend America and the world.

Faced with that choice, I will defend America every time.

Others would have chosen differently. They now agree that the world is better off with Saddam out of power. They just didn't support removing Saddam from power. [*Laughter*] Maybe they were hoping he'd lose the next Iraqi election. [*Laughter*] We showed the dictator and a watching world that we mean what we say. Because our coalition acted, Saddam's torture chambers are closed. Because we acted, the Middle East is more peaceful. Because we acted, Iraq's weapons programs are ended forever. Because we acted, nations like Libya have gotten the message and renounced their weapons programs. Because we acted, an example of democracy is rising at the heart of the Middle East. Because we acted, the world is more free, and America is more secure.

We still face thugs and terrorists in Iraq who would rather go on killing the innocent than accept the advance of liberty. They know that a free Iraq would be a major defeat in the cause of terror. This collection of killers is trying to shake the will of America and the civilized world. They don't know us very well. America will never be intimidated by thugs and assassins.

We're aggressively striking the terrorists in Iraq, defeating them there so we do not have to face them in our own country. We're calling other nations to help Iraq build a free society, which will make us all safer. We're standing with the Iraqi people as they assume more of their own defense and move toward self-government. These aren't easy tasks, but they're essential tasks. We will finish what we have begun, and we'll win this important victory in the war on terror.

On national security, Americans have the clearest possible choice. Our opponents say they approve of bold action in the world but only if no other government disagrees. I'm all for united action, and so are the 34 coalition partners we have in Iraq right now. But America must never outsource America's national security decisions to the leaders of other governments.

Some of our opponents are skeptical that the war on terror is really a war at all. They view terrorism more as a crime, a problem to be solved with law enforcement and indictments. Our Nation followed that approach after the World Trade Center was bombed in 1993. The matter was handled in the courts and thought to be settled. But the terrorists were still training in Afghanistan, plotting in other nations, and drawing up more ambitious plans. After the chaos and carnage of September the 11th, it is not enough to serve our enemies with legal papers. With those attacks, the terrorists and their supporters declared war on the United States, and war is what they got.

The men and women who are fighting this war and who have seen the enemy understand the stakes. Last year, in a letter home from the Iraqi theater, a Navy Corpsman named Lonnie Lewis wrote this: "We have to remind ourselves of what this country stands for, life, liberty, and justice for all. In order to maintain those rights, we have to stop the threat of terrorism." Corpsman Lewis' letter concludes, "My family is first. My country is where they live. I will defend it."

This is the caliber of the people who are defending America. We are counting on them. The people of Iraq and people across the Middle East are depending on them. And I assure you, ladies and gentlemen, the cause of freedom is in good hands.

This Nation is prosperous and strong, yet we need to remember the sources of America's greatness. We're strong because we love freedom. America has a special charge to keep, because we are freedom's home and defender. We believe that freedom is the deepest need and hope of every human heart. We believe that freedom is the future of every nation, and we know that freedom is not America's gift to the world. It is the Almighty God's gift to every man and woman in this world.

We also know that the greatest strength of this country lies in the hearts and souls of our citizens. We're strong because of the values we try to live by, courage and compassion, reverence and integrity. We're strong because of the institutions that help to give us direction and purpose, families and schools and religious congregations. These values and institutions are fundamental to our lives, and they deserve the respect of our Government.

We stand for the fair treatment of faith-based groups, so they can receive Federal support for their works of compassion and healing. We will not stand for Government discrimination against people of faith.

We stand for welfare reforms that require work and strengthen marriage, which have helped millions of Americans find independence and dignity. We will not stand for any attempt to weaken those reforms and send people back into lives of dependence.

We stand for a culture of life in which every person counts and every person matters. We will not stand for the treatment of any life as a commodity to be experimented upon or exploited or cloned.

We stand for the confirmation of judges who strictly and faithfully interpret the law. We will not stand for judges who undermine democracy by legislating from the bench and try to remake the culture by court order.

And we stand for a culture of responsibility in America. We're changing the culture of America from one that has said, "If it feels good, do it," and "If you've got a problem, blame somebody else," to a culture in which each of us understands we're responsible for the decisions we make. If you're fortunate enough to be a mother or a father, you're responsible for loving your child with all your heart. If you're concerned about the quality of the education in the community in which you live, you're responsible for doing something about it. If you're a CEO in America, you're responsible for telling the truth to your shareholders and your employees. And in this new responsibility society, each of us is responsible for loving our neighbor just like we'd like to be loved ourself.

For all Americans, these years in our history will always stand apart. There are quiet times in the life of a nation when little is expected of leaders. This is not one of those times. You and I are living in a period when the stakes are high and the challenges are difficult, the choices are clear, and resolve is needed.

None of us will ever forget that week when one era ended and another began. On September the 14th, 2001, I stood in the ruins of the Twin Towers. I remember a lot that day. Workers in hardhats were shouting, "Whatever it takes." One fellow pointed at me and said, "Don't let me down." As we all did that day, these men and women searching through the rubble took it personally. I took it personally. I've a responsibility that goes on. I will never relent in bringing justice to our enemies. I will defend America, whatever it takes.

In these times I've also been witness to the character of this Nation. Not so long ago, some had their doubts about the American character, our capacity to meet serious challenges, to serve a cause greater than self-interest. But Americans have given their answer. I've seen the unselfish courage of our troops. I've seen the heroism of Americans in the face of danger. I've seen the spirit of service and compassion renewed in our country. We've all seen our Nation unite in common purpose when it mattered most.

We will need all of these qualities for the work ahead. We have a war to win, and the world is counting on us to lead the cause of freedom. We have a duty to spread compassion and opportunity to every part of America.

This is the work that history has set before us. We welcome it. And we know that for the United States of America, the best days lie ahead.

God bless. Thank you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 7:18 p.m. at the Washington Convention Center. In his remarks, he referred to Gov. Olene S. Walker of Utah; Gov. Ernie Fletcher of Kentucky; Gov. Haley Barbour of Mississippi; Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger of California; Gov. Jeb Bush of Florida; Gov. Bob Taft of Ohio; Gov. Kenny C. Guinn of Nevada; and former President Saddam Hussein of Iraq. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of these remarks.

Remarks Calling for a Constitutional Amendment Defining and Protecting Marriage

February 24, 2004

Good morning. Eight years ago, Congress passed and President Clinton signed the Defense of Marriage Act, which defined marriage for purposes of Federal law as the legal union between one man and one woman as husband and wife. The Act passed the House

of Representatives by a vote of 342 to 67 and the Senate by a vote of 85 to 14. Those congressional votes and the passage of similar defense-of-marriage laws in 38 States express an overwhelming consensus in our country for protecting the institution of marriage.

In recent months, however, some activist judges and local officials have made an aggressive attempt to redefine marriage. In Massachusetts, four judges on the highest court have indicated they will order the issuance of marriage licenses to applicants of the same gender in May of this year. In San Francisco, city officials have issued thousands of marriage licenses to people of the same gender, contrary to the California Family Code. That code, which clearly defines marriage as the union of a man and a woman, was approved overwhelmingly by the voters of California. A county in New Mexico has also issued marriage licenses to applicants of the same gender. And unless action is taken, we can expect more arbitrary court decisions, more litigation, more defiance of the law by local officials, all of which adds to uncertainty.

After more than two centuries of American jurisprudence and millennia of human experience, a few judges and local authorities are presuming to change the most fundamental institution of civilization. Their actions have created confusion on an issue that requires clarity.

On a matter of such importance, the voice of the people must be heard. Activist courts have left the people with one recourse. If we are to prevent the meaning of marriage from being changed forever, our Nation must enact a constitutional amendment to protect marriage in America.

Decisive and democratic action is needed, because attempts to redefine marriage in a single State or city could have serious consequences throughout the country. The Constitution says that "full faith and credit shall be given in each State to the public acts and records and judicial proceedings of every other State." Those who want to change the meaning of marriage will claim that this provision requires all States and cities to recognize same-sex marriages performed anywhere in America.

Congress attempted to address this problem in the Defense of Marriage Act by declaring that no State must accept another State's definition of marriage. My administration will vigorously defend this act of Congress. Yet there is no assurance that the Defense of Marriage Act will not, itself, be struck down by activist courts. In that event, every State would be forced to recognize any relationship that judges in Boston or officials in San Francisco choose to call a marriage. Furthermore, even if the Defense of Marriage Act is upheld, the law does not protect marriage within any State or city.

For all these reasons, the defense of marriage requires a constitutional amendment. An amendment to the Constitution is never to be undertaken lightly. The amendment process has addressed many serious matters of national concern. And the preservation of marriage rises to this level of national importance.

The union of a man and woman is the most enduring human institution, honoring—honored and encouraged in all cultures and by every religious faith. Ages of experience have taught humanity that the commitment of a husband and wife to love and to serve one another promotes the welfare of children and the stability of society. Marriage cannot be severed from its cultural, religious, and natural roots without weakening the good influence of society. Government, by recognizing and protecting marriage, serves the interests of all.

Today I call upon the Congress to promptly pass and to send to the States for ratification an amendment to our Constitution defining and protecting marriage as a union of man and woman as husband and wife. The amendment should fully protect marriage while leaving the State legislatures free to make their own choices in defining legal arrangements other than marriage.

America is a free society which limits the role of government in the lives of our citizens. This commitment of freedom, however, does not require the redefinition of one of our most basic social institutions. Our Government should respect every person and protect the institution of marriage. There is no contradiction between these responsibilities.

We should also conduct this difficult debate in a manner worthy of our country, without bitterness or anger. In all that lies ahead, let us match strong convictions with kindness and good will and decency.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:43 a.m. in the Roosevelt Room at the White House. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of these remarks.

Statement on Senate Action To Block Medical Liability Reform

February 24, 2004

I am disappointed that a minority in the Senate has again decided to play politics and block our Nation's ability to accomplish medical liability reform.

Today's vote is a blow to America's families, because pregnant women are losing access to their obstetricians and gynecologists due to frivolous and abusive lawsuits. Pregnant women who need prenatal and obstetric health care services deserve access to doctors in their own communities. Without the passage of reasonable reforms, the Nation's badly broken medical liability system will continue to drive physicians like obstetricians and gynecologists out of the practice of medicine and drive up the costs of health care for all Americans. For the benefit of America's families and for the sake of our health care system, there needs to be medical liability reform this year.

Statement on the Parliamentary Elections in Iran

February 24, 2004

I am very disappointed in the recently disputed parliamentary elections in Iran. The disqualification of some 2,400 candidates by the unelected Guardian Council deprived many Iranians of the opportunity to freely choose their representatives. I join many in Iran and around the world in condemning the Iranian regime's efforts to stifle freedom of speech—including the closing of two leading reformist newspapers—in the runup to the election. Such measures undermine the rule of law and are clear attempts to deny the Iranian people's desire to freely choose their leaders.

The United States supports the Iranian people's aspirations to live in freedom, enjoy their God-given rights, and determine their own destiny.

Statement on Signing the NASA Flexibility Act of 2004

February 24, 2004

Today, I have signed into law S. 610, the "NASA Flexibility Act of 2004." The Act strengthens the ability of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration to manage effectively the NASA personnel upon whom the future successes of America's civil space program depend.

Section 3 of the Act enacts new subsections 9802(g), (h), and (i) in title 5 of the United States Code, which purport to require or regulate the submission of certain plans, recommendations, and budget requests to the Congress. The executive branch shall construe these subsections in a manner consistent with the President's constitutional authority to supervise the unitary executive branch, to withhold information the disclosure of which could impair the deliberative processes of the Executive, and to recommend for the consideration of the Congress such measures as the President judges necessary and expedient.

George W. Bush

The White House,
February 24, 2004.

NOTE: S. 610, approved February 24, was assigned Public Law No. 108–201. An original was not available for verification of the content of this statement.

Executive Order 13329—Encouraging Innovation in Manufacturing

February 24, 2004

By the authority vested in me as President by the Constitution and the laws of the United States of America, including the

Small Business Act, as amended (15 U.S.C. 631 *et seq.*), and to help ensure that Federal agencies properly and effectively assist the private sector in its manufacturing innovation efforts, it is hereby ordered as follows:

Section 1. *Policy.* Continued technological innovation is critical to a strong manufacturing sector in the United States economy. The Federal Government has an important role, including through the Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) and the Small Business Technology Transfer (STTR) programs, in helping to advance innovation, including innovation in manufacturing, through small businesses.

Sec. 2. *Duties of Department and Agency Heads.* The head of each executive branch department or agency with one or more SBIR programs or one or more STTR programs shall:

(a) to the extent permitted by law and in a manner consistent with the mission of that department or agency, give high priority within such programs to manufacturing-related research and development to advance the policy set forth in section 1 of this order; and

(b) submit reports annually to the Administrator of the Small Business Administration and the Director of the Office of Science and Technology Policy concerning the efforts of such department or agency to implement subsection 2(a) of this order.

Sec. 3. *Duties of Administrator of the Small Business Administration.* The Administrator of the Small Business Administration:

(a) shall establish, after consultation with the Director of the Office of Science and Technology Policy, formats and schedules for submission of reports by the heads of departments and agencies under subsection 2(b) of this order; and

(b) is authorized to issue to departments and agencies guidelines and directives (in addition to the formats and schedules under subsection 3(a)) as the Administrator determines from time to time are necessary to implement subsection 2(a) of this order, after such guidelines and directives are submitted to the President, through the Director of the Office of Science and Technology Policy, for approval and are approved by the President.

Sec. 4. *Definitions.* As used in this order:

(a) "Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) program" means a program to which section 9(e)(4) of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 638(e)(4)) refers;

(b) "Small Business Technology Transfer (STTR) program" means a program to which section 9(e)(6) of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 638(e)(6)) refers;

(c) "research and development" means an activity set forth in section 9(e)(5) of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 638(e)(5)); and

(d) "manufacturing-related" means relating to: (i) manufacturing processes, equipment and systems; or (ii) manufacturing workforce skills and protection.

Sec. 5. *General Provisions.* (a) Nothing in this order shall be construed to impair or otherwise affect the authority of the Director of the Office of Management and Budget with respect to budget, administrative, or legislative proposals.

(b) Nothing in this order shall be construed to require disclosure of information the disclosure of which is prohibited by law or by Executive Order, including Executive Order 12958 of April 17, 1995, as amended.

(c) This order is intended only to improve the internal management of the executive branch and is not intended to, and does not, create any right or benefit, substantive or procedural, enforceable at law or in equity, against the United States, its departments, agencies, or other entities, its officers or employees, or any other person.

George W. Bush

The White House,
February 24, 2004.

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 8:45 a.m., February 25, 2004]

NOTE: This Executive order was published in the *Federal Register* on February 26.

Executive Order 13330—Human Service Transportation Coordination

February 24, 2004

By the authority vested in me as President by the Constitution and the laws of the United States of America, and to enhance access to transportation to improve mobility, employment opportunities, and access to community services for persons who are transportation-disadvantaged, it is hereby ordered as follows:

Section 1. This order is issued consistent with the following findings and principles:

(a) A strong America depends on citizens who are productive and who actively participate in the life of their communities.

(b) Transportation plays a critical role in providing access to employment, medical and health care, education, and other community services and amenities. The importance of this role is underscored by the variety of transportation programs that have been created in conjunction with health and human service programs, and by the significant Federal investment in accessible public transportation systems throughout the Nation.

(c) These transportation resources, however, are often difficult for citizens to understand and access, and are more costly than necessary due to inconsistent and unnecessary Federal and State program rules and restrictions.

(d) A broad range of Federal program funding allows for the purchase or provision of transportation services and resources for persons who are transportation-disadvantaged. Yet, in too many communities, these services and resources are fragmented, unused, or altogether unavailable.

(e) Federally assisted community transportation services should be seamless, comprehensive, and accessible to those who rely on them for their lives and livelihoods. For persons with mobility limitations related to advanced age, persons with disabilities, and persons struggling for self-sufficiency, transportation within and between our communities should be as available and affordable as possible.

(f) The development, implementation, and maintenance of responsive, comprehensive, coordinated community transportation systems is essential for persons with disabilities, persons with low incomes, and older adults who rely on such transportation to fully participate in their communities.

Sec. 2. *Definitions.* (a) As used in this order, the term "agency" means an executive department or agency of the Federal Government.

(b) For the purposes of this order, persons who are transportation-disadvantaged are persons who qualify for Federally conducted or Federally assisted transportation-related programs or services due to disability, income, or advanced age.

Sec. 3. *Establishment of the Interagency Transportation Coordinating Council on Access and Mobility.* (a) There is hereby established, within the Department of Transportation for administrative purposes, the "Interagency Transportation Coordinating Council on Access and Mobility" ("Interagency Transportation Coordinating Council" or "Council"). The membership of the Interagency Transportation Coordinating Council shall consist of:

(i) the Secretaries of Transportation, Health and Human Services, Education, Labor, Veterans Affairs, Agriculture, Housing and Urban Development, and the Interior, the Attorney General, and the Commissioner of Social Security; and

(ii) such other Federal officials as the Chairperson of the Council may designate.

(b) The Secretary of Transportation, or the Secretary's designee, shall serve as the Chairperson of the Council. The Chairperson shall convene and preside at meetings of the Council, determine its agenda, direct its work, and, as appropriate to particular subject matters, establish and direct subgroups of the Council, which shall consist exclusively of the Council's members.

(c) A member of the Council may designate any person who is part of the member's agency and who is an officer appointed by the President or a full-time employee serving in a position with pay equal to or greater than the minimum rate payable for GS–15 of the General Schedule to perform functions of the Council or its subgroups on the member's behalf.

Sec 4. *Functions of the Interagency Transportation Coordinating Council.* The Interagency Transportation Coordinating Council shall:

(a) promote interagency cooperation and the establishment of appropriate mechanisms to minimize duplication and overlap of Federal programs and services so that transportation-disadvantaged persons have access to more transportation services;

(b) facilitate access to the most appropriate, cost-effective transportation services within existing resources;

(c) encourage enhanced customer access to the variety of transportation and resources available;

(d) formulate and implement administrative, policy, and procedural mechanisms that enhance transportation services at all levels; and

(e) develop and implement a method for monitoring progress on achieving the goals of this order.

Sec. 5. *Report.* In performing its functions, the Interagency Transportation Coordinating Council shall present to me a report not later than 1 calendar year from the date of this order. The report shall:

(a) Identify those Federal, State, Tribal and local laws, regulations, procedures, and actions that have proven to be most useful and appropriate in coordinating transportation services for the targeted populations;

(b) Identify substantive and procedural requirements of transportation-related Federal laws and regulations that are duplicative or restrict the laws' and regulations' most efficient operation;

(c) Describe the results achieved, on an agency and program basis, in: (i) simplifying access to transportation services for persons with disabilities, persons with low income, and older adults; (ii) providing the most appropriate, cost-effective transportation services within existing resources; and (iii) reducing duplication to make funds available for more services to more such persons;

(d) Provide recommendations to simplify and coordinate applicable substantive, procedural, and administrative requirements; and

(e) Provide any other recommendations that would, in the judgment of the Council, advance the principles set forth in section 1 of this order.

Sec. 6. *General.* (a) Agencies shall assist the Interagency Transportation Coordinating Council and provide information to the Council consistent with applicable law as may be necessary to carry out its functions. To the extent permitted by law, and as permitted by available agency resources, the Department of Transportation shall provide funding and administrative support for the Council.

(b) Nothing in this order shall be construed to impair or otherwise affect the functions of the Director of the Office of Management and Budget relating to budget, administrative, or legislative proposals.

(c) This order is intended only to improve the internal management of the executive branch and is not intended to, and does not, create any right or benefit, substantive or procedural, enforceable at law or in equity by a party against the United States, its departments, agencies, instrumentalities or entities, its officers or employees, or any other person.

George W. Bush

The White House,
February 24, 2004.

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 11:57 a.m., February 25, 2004]

NOTE: This Executive order was published in the *Federal Register* on February 26.

Remarks Following Discussions With President Mikheil Saakashvili of Georgia and an Exchange With Reporters

February 25, 2004

President Bush. Here's what we're going to do. I will make a statement. The President will make a statement. I will then call upon an American correspondent to ask a question. The President will call upon a Georgian correspondent. We'll have two questions per side.

Mr. President, welcome. We followed the revolution that took place in your country very closely. We appreciate your firm commitment to democracy and freedom. We've

had a very interesting discussion. I know firsthand that the President will do everything he can to earn the confidence of the people of Georgia by representing their will, by fighting corruption, by working for a system based upon integrity and decency and human rights.

I'm impressed by this leader. I'm impressed by his vision. I'm impressed by his courage. I am heartened by the fact that we have such a strong friend, a friend with whom we share values.

So Mr. President, welcome to the Oval Office. I appreciate the candid discussion we've had, and I'm proud to call you friend.

President Saakashvili. Thank you. It's a great honor, for me and for the people of Georgia, to be here in this Oval Office. It's not—our cooperation is very deep. We consider ourselves as very close ally and friend of the United States. We are proud to be friend of the United States. I am speaking on behalf of every Georgian.

I have to say that this cooperation, friendship—the U.S. helped us when we needed it most, and would like peoples—other peoples in Europe will never forget that. But our cooperation is—that held friendship is not only about security. It's not only about economy. Primarily it's about our shared values. And we are part of—proud part of antiterrorist coalition. We have forces in Iraq. We are cooperating on other issues.

We are also working very hard on our improved relations with Russia. I had a very interesting conversation with President Putin in Moscow, and I believe Russia should become our reliable partner, and we should improve our relations.

But at the same time, we believe that America's help is absolutely essential, and we are grateful. We will stay grateful, and we want to be not only close ally, but we want to be strong ally. Georgia will become stronger. Georgia will become more democratic. Democracy is top priority. Freedom of speech is top priority. Free enterprise, free market is top priority. And I think Georgia can become a role model for the whole region. And this is very important. We need U.S. help in that.

Regarding our revolution, it was the proudest moment of my own life and of life of the whole generation. And we are so proud that we were supported in our fight for democracy and for people's right to choose by the United States, and Washington was the first to come and help us. And I'm sure we'll never forget that.

Mr. President, I really enjoyed being here at the White House. Thank you very much.

President Bush. Thank you. Hold on a second, please. Deb, [Deb Riechmann, Associated Press] we're going to——

Q. What do you think about——

President Bush. Hold on, please. Will somebody translate——

President Saakashvili. It's in English.

President Bush. I understand. I understand. Hold on for a second. The way this is going to work is this.

Q. I'm from Georgia.

President Bush. I know you are, excuse me. We're going to start with the American press, and then there will be a Georgian press, and then there will be an American press, and then there will be a Georgian press. That's the best way to maintain order, so we don't have everybody yelling at the same time.

Deb.

Federal Deficit/Social Security

Q. Mr. President, Chairman Greenspan today suggested trimming Social Security benefits for baby boomers to deal with the rising budget deficit. Do you think this is a good idea, a good way to ease the deficit, which is expected to top over $520 billion this year?

President Bush. First of all, let me talk about the short-term deficit. The best way to trim the deficit is to follow the budgetary plan I submitted to the United States Congress. We presented a plan that will cut the deficit in half over the next 5 years. I haven't talked to the Chairman or read his comments. I need to see exactly what he said. My position on Social Security benefits is this, that: those benefits should not be changed for people at or near retirement.

As you know, in the 2000 campaign, I articulated a point of view that we ought to have personal savings accounts for younger workers that would make sure those younger workers receive benefits equal to or greater

than that which is expected. I still maintain the same position, but I haven't seen his comments completely.

Georgia's Rose Revolution

Q. What do you think about Rose Revolution in Georgia?

President Bush. The Rose Revolution? It was an historic moment. It was a moment where the people spoke. It was a moment where a Government changed because the people peacefully exercised their voice and raised their voice. And Georgia transitioned to a new Government in an inspiring way.

The President and I discussed the ramifications of the Rose Revolution around other parts of the world. The possibility of people taking charge of their own lives and transforming society in a peaceful way is a powerful example to people around the world who long for freedom and long for honest government.

And so the Rose Revolution is an inspiring moment of history. And again, I want to congratulate the President and his team for insisting that democracy prevail through peaceful means.

Steve [Steve Holland, Reuters].

Situation in Haiti

Q. Mr. President, in Haiti, the rebels are advancing and a power-sharing deal has collapsed. Are you prepared to let President Aristide be overthrown?

President Bush. Secretary Powell and I have been in close consultations on this subject. We still hope to be able to achieve a political settlement between the current Government and the rebels. We are watching the situation very carefully. The Secretary of State has been in touch with Canadian officials and French officials and Caribbean officials, all aimed to convince the parties to come to the table and effect a peaceful solution.

In terms of our own planning here, I have made it abundantly clear to the Coast Guard that we will turn back any refugee that attempts to reach our shore. And that message needs to be very clear as well to the Haitian people. We will have a robust presence with an effective strategy. And so we encourage, strongly encourage the Haitian people to stay home as we work to reach a peaceful solution to this problem.

Q. Do you think it's possible you'll have to send troops there?

President Bush. What we are—incident to a political settlement, we will encourage the international community to provide a security presence. And that is also being discussed right now. But first things, first, Steve, is to work on a—is to work on a political solution.

Georgia-Russia Relations

Q.——very complicated problems, with Russian bases problems——

President Bush. Well, I appreciate you bringing up the Russian bases problem. We expect the Russian Government to honor the Istanbul commitment. The Istanbul commitment made it very clear that Russia would leave those places. We will continue to work with the President and President Putin on that commitment.

I also appreciate very much the President's work with the Russians. It's important that relations between Georgia and Russia be positive. I found it a very positive move and a very sophisticated move by the President that his first trip was to Russia, and I encouraged that. I thought it was a smart thing to do. And we will work with Vladimir Putin, with whom I've got a good relationship, to make sure relations are good with Georgia. It's important for the Georgian people to have good and strong and peaceful relations with Russia. There's a lot we can work on. We can work together to fight terror. Hopefully, as the Georgia economy approves—improves—and I'm confident it will—there will be opportunities for—business opportunities.

So the President has got a good vision and this has been a good trip. I believe in his abilities, and I appreciate his vision. And the people of Georgia will be well served by his leadership.

Thank you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:26 a.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to President Vladimir Putin of Russia. A reporter referred to President Jean-Bertrand Aristide of Haiti. A portion of these remarks could not be verified because the tape was incomplete.

Memorandum on Determination Consistent With the Emergency Supplemental Appropriations Act for Defense and for the Reconstruction of Iraq and Afghanistan, 2004 (Public Law 108–106), To Make Available Assistance for Liberia

February 25, 2004

Presidential Determination No. 2004–23

Memorandum for the Secretary of State, the Secretary of the Treasury, the Secretary of Defense, the Administrator, United States Agency for International Development

Subject: Determination Consistent with the Emergency Supplemental Appropriations Act for Defense and for the Reconstruction of Iraq and Afghanistan, 2004 (Public Law 108–106), to Make Available Assistance for Liberia

Consistent with the authority vested in me by the Emergency Supplemental Appropriations Act for Defense and for the Reconstruction of Iraq and Afghanistan, 2004 (Public Law 108–106), under the heading "International Disaster and Famine Assistance," I hereby determine that it is in the national interest of the United States and essential to efforts to reduce international terrorism to furnish $114 million in assistance for Liberia from funds made available under that heading.

The Secretary of State is authorized and directed to report this determination to the Congress and to arrange for its publication in the *Federal Register.*

George W. Bush

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 8:45 a.m., March 2, 2004]

NOTE: This memorandum will be published in the *Federal Register* on March 3.

Memorandum on Determination Pursuant to Section 2(c)(1) of the Migration and Refugee Assistance Act of 1962, as Amended

February 25, 2004

Presidential Determination No. 2004–24

Memorandum for the Secretary of State

Subject: Determination Pursuant to Section 2(c)(1) of the Migration and Refugee Assistance Act of 1962, as Amended

Pursuant to section 2(c)(1) of the Migration and Refugee Assistance Act of 1962, as amended, 22 U.S.C. 2601(c)(1), I hereby determine that it is important to the national interest that up to $20 million be made available from the U.S. Emergency Refugee and Migration Assistance Fund as a contribution to the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) to address unexpected, urgent refugee needs in the West Bank and Gaza.

You are authorized and directed to inform the appropriate committees of the Congress of this determination and the obligation of funds under this authority, and to arrange for the publication of this memorandum in the *Federal Register.*

George W. Bush

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 8:45 a.m., March 2, 2004]

NOTE: This memorandum will be published in the *Federal Register* on March 3.

Letter to Congressional Leaders on the Deployment of U.S. Military Forces in Response to Security Concerns for United States Embassy Personnel in Haiti

February 25, 2004

Dear Mr. Speaker: (Dear Mr. President:)

Increasing armed rebellion in Haiti, the limited effectiveness of the Haitian National Police, and insecurity in Port-au-Prince brought on by increased armed pro-government gang activity have contributed to a climate of insecurity for the U.S. Embassy and

its supporting facilities in Port-au-Prince, Haiti. These circumstances and the potential for further deterioration of the security environment in Haiti render the safety of the U.S. Embassy, its facilities, and U.S. personnel uncertain.

On February 23, 2004, a security force of approximately 55 U.S. military personnel from the U.S. Joint Forces Command deployed to Port-au-Prince, Haiti, to augment the Embassy security forces.

Although the U.S. forces are equipped for combat, this movement was undertaken solely for the purpose of protecting American citizens and property. It is anticipated that U.S. forces will provide this support until such time as it is determined that the security situation has stabilized and the threat to the Embassy, its facilities, and U.S. personnel has ended.

I have taken this action pursuant to my constitutional authority to conduct U.S. foreign relations and as Commander in Chief and Chief Executive. I am providing this report as part of my efforts to keep the Congress informed, consistent with the War Powers Resolution.

Sincerely,

George W. Bush

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to J. Dennis Hastert, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Ted Stevens, President pro tempore of the Senate.

Message to the Congress Reporting a Certification Regarding NATO Invitees Bulgaria, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Romania, Slovakia, and Slovenia

February 25, 2004

To the Congress of the United States:

Consistent with Condition (3) of the resolution of advice and consent to the ratification of the Protocols to the North Atlantic Treaty of 1949 on the Accession of Bulgaria, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Romania, Slovakia, and Slovenia, adopted by the United States Senate on May 8, 2003, and based on the recommendation of the Department of State, I hereby certify to the Congress that each of these governments is cooperating fully with United States efforts to obtain the fullest possible accounting of captured or missing United States personnel from past military conflicts or Cold War incidents, to include:

(A) facilitating full access to relevant archival material; and

(B) identifying individuals who may possess knowledge relative to captured or missing United States personnel, and encouraging such individuals to speak with United States Government officials.

George W. Bush

The White House,
February 25, 2004.

NOTE: This message was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on February 26.

Message to the Senate Reporting a Certification Regarding NATO Invitees Bulgaria, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Romania, Slovakia, and Slovenia

February 25, 2004

To the Senate of the United States:

Consistent with Condition (l)(A) of the resolution of advice and consent to the ratification of the Protocols to the North Atlantic Treaty of 1949 on the Accession of Bulgaria, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Romania, Slovakia, and Slovenia, adopted by the United States Senate on May 8, 2003, and based on the recommendation of the Department of State, I hereby certify to the Senate that:

(i) the inclusion of Bulgaria, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Romania, Slovakia, and Slovenia in NATO will not have the effect of increasing the overall percentage share of the United States in the common budgets of NATO; and (ii) the inclusion of Bulgaria, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Romania, Slovakia, and Slovenia in NATO does not detract from the ability of the United States to meet

or to fund its military requirements outside the North Atlantic area.

George W. Bush

The White House,
February 25, 2004.

NOTE: This message was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on February 26.

Letter to Congressional Leaders Transmitting a Report on the Security Progress of NATO Invitees Bulgaria, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Romania, Slovakia, and Slovenia

February 26, 2004

Dear _____ *:*

Consistent with Condition 3(2)(A) of the Senate resolution of advice and consent to ratification to the Protocols to the North Atlantic Treaty of 1949 on the Accession of Bulgaria, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Romania, Slovakia, and Slovenia, passed on May 8, 2003, I am providing a report prepared by my Administration.

This report describes the progress of the seven NATO invitees in satisfying the security sector and security vetting requirements for membership in NATO. As the report makes clear, all seven satisfy these NATO requirements.

Sincerely,

George W. Bush

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to Pat Roberts, chairman, and John D. Rockefeller IV, vice chairman, Senate Select Committee on Intelligence, and Porter J. Goss, chairman, and Jane Harman, vice chairman, House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence.

Remarks in a Discussion on the National Economy in Louisville, Kentucky

February 26, 2004

The President. Listen, thanks for having me. I want to thank you all for coming. What we're going to do here is have a—talk about how our economy works and how good public policy out of Washington can affect people's lives in a positive way, can encourage job growth, so people have got a hopeful future. That's what we're here to talk about. And the best way to talk about it is to have people who are actually living lives that—which have been affected by policy.

But first, I want to say some things, if you don't mind.

James Kirchdorfer, Sr. Go right ahead. [*Laughter*]

The President. Okay, good. [*Laughter*] I love the entrepreneurial spirit of America. It's one of the things that, I think, makes the country unique and strong. I love family-owned businesses. Nothing wrong with a son trying to follow in a father's footsteps. [*Laughter*]

I appreciate the Kirchdorfer family and employees for welcoming us here. Jim was bragging backstage about the success of this company is really based upon the fact you've got great workers, highly productive, well-motivated workers, which speaks volumes about your management style and your ability to make good decisions, like marrying your wife, Carolyn. [*Laughter*]

I appreciate a member of my Cabinet being here today. Elaine Chao is with us. The Senator married really well. [*Laughter*] So did she. Elaine, I appreciate your hard work. I want to thank very much my friend Anne Northup, who flew down with me today. We had a fascinating discussion about Kentucky. She's doing a great job. She's straightforward. She cares about people.

It's good to see the Governor and the Lieutenant Governor here. I want to thank you for coming, Governor and Governor. I appreciate you all coming. Ernie, thanks for being here. And Steve Pence, thanks, Steve.

Mr. Mayor—where's the mayor? Oh, Mr. Mayor, thanks for coming. Jerry Abramson, honored you're here. I really appreciate you taking time to be here. I want to thank you all for taking time out of your day to come and listen to this dialog.

There's a person I met at the airport I want to herald. Her name is Marina Partee. She is—thank you, Marina. She helps victims of domestic violence. See, she is a volunteer to make Louisville, Kentucky, a better place for all. She's one of those thousands of loving

souls who are willing to provide comfort to those who hurt.

The reason I bring up Marina is that we talk about the strength of America a lot. We say that we're strong because we've got a great military—and we'll keep it that way, by the way—we're strong because we're a wealthy nation. The true strength of this country lies in the hearts and souls of our citizens. That's where we find the real strength of America. We find strength in the fact that there are souls who are willing to take time out of their busy lives to love a neighbor just like they would like to be loved themselves.

One of my jobs is to rally the armies of compassion, people who have heard the universal call to love. And Marina is a soldier in the army of compassion. I want to thank you for setting a fine example. I urge people in this fine city to help somebody who hurts. There are all kinds of ways that you can serve your community. You could mentor a child. You can help somebody who is homeless. You can help a shut-in. But be a part of the army of compassion. You represent the true strength of the country when you do so. So, Marina, thank you for coming. Thanks for the example. I'm proud you're here.

I'm optimistic about the future of this country because I know what we've been through. Yes, I saw firsthand what the Nation has overcome. We have overcome a recession. We overcame an attack. On September the 11th, the enemy attacked us, and it hurt our economy. It also affected our psychology, made us realize oceans were no longer—could no longer protect us from an enemy which hates what we stand for. And then, all of a sudden, we started to recover. Things got better because of the resiliency of our economy and the fact that Americans refused to give in to terror. Then we had some corporate scandals, scandals which affected our confidence. The capitalist system requires honesty and openness. But we dealt with it straightforward. We said, "If you're going to lie or cheat or steal, if you don't tell the truth to your shareholders and your employees, there will be serious consequences."

And then, as the economy kind of started to recover from those three, I made a tough decision, and that is to deal with threats before they fully materialize, threats abroad before they become imminent. And that, obviously, was not only in Afghanistan but in Iraq. I looked at intelligence and saw a threat. Congress looked at intelligence and saw a threat. The United Nations Security Council looked at the intelligence, and it saw a threat. Saddam Hussein said, "I'm not going to expose my weapons. I'm not going to get rid of my—I'm not going to allow inspectors in," he said. But this is the same man who had used them.

So I had to make a decision: Do I trust the word of madman, or do I remember the lessons of September the 11th? I vowed on September the 11th to do my duty to protect America, to deal with threats before they fully materialize. So I called upon our country and many other nations to respond. Some did; some didn't. But the world is better off without Saddam Hussein. The people of Iraq are better off without Saddam Hussein.

A march to war affects the confidence of the people. Laura reminded me, in July of 2002, on the television screens came the notation "America Is Marching to War." It's hard to invest capital when you're marching to war. It's hard to be optimistic, isn't it? War is not an optimistic thought. Now we're marching to peace. We're marching to peace.

But all those affected not only the psychology of the country but affected our economy. But we overcame the obstacles, and that's why I'm optimistic. I say we overcame them—the economy is growing. We added over 100,000 jobs since January, new jobs. Inflation is low; interest rates, low. Manufacturing activity is up. We're growing. The economy is getting better. There's more to do, but look at what we've overcome. And we overcame it because of good fiscal policy out of Washington, DC, in some part. We overcame it because the role of Government is not to manage the economy; the role of Government is to create an environment in which entrepreneurs are willing to take risk and create new jobs.

And so we cut the taxes on the people. We let people keep more of their own money. We understand that when somebody has got more of their own money to spend, they're likely to demand a good or a service.

And in this economy, when somebody demands a good or a service, somebody will supply that good or a service. And when somebody supplies that good or a service, it means somebody is working. That's what that means.

We cut all taxes. I believe if you're going to cut taxes, you shouldn't try to pick and choose winners and losers in the Tax Code. Everybody ought to get tax relief. And so we reduced taxes on everybody who paid taxes. And it particularly helps small businesses when you cut income taxes, because, you see, most small businesses, like some up here, are what they call Subchapter S corporations, which means they pay tax at the individual income tax level. A lot of small businesses are sole proprietorships, which means you pay tax at the individual income tax level. So when you hear people talking about cutting income taxes on individuals, not only does it help families, those tax cuts help small businesses. And if you're worried about job creation, like I am, and you understand that most new jobs are created by small businesses, it made eminent sense to have policies that affected small businesses in a positive way.

We also helped families. We increased the child credit to $1,000 per child. That helps moms and dads do their solemn duty to raise their children. It reduced the marriage penalty—the tax relief reduced the marriage penalty. I think it makes sense to encourage marriage in our society through the Tax Code, not discourage marriage. We helped our senior citizens by reducing the tax on capital gains and dividends. We encouraged small-business investment by raising the limits of deductibility, and we'll hear some talk about that in a minute. And we put the death tax on its way to extinction.

Now, let me talk about the death tax, right quick. See, I think it's really unfair to tax a person's assets twice, while they're living and after they die. I think people ought to be able to leave their business to whomever they choose without the Federal Government making it difficult to do so. I think a person ought to be able to live their farm—leave their farm to whomever they choose without the Federal Government making it difficult to do so. The death tax is bad for small businesses. It's bad for farmers and ranchers. It makes—it's, in my judgment, bad policy, and it's on its way to being put to extinction. I say "on its way"—you'll hear me talk in a minute that these—some of these taxes don't really go away. It's like they go away for a period of time, but they come back.

Now, as I mentioned, we're doing well. But there are more things we need to do. We need an energy policy. It's hard to be a manufacturing company, for example, in America if you have uncertainty when it comes to energy supply and energy price.

We need tort reform. It is really hard to be a small-business owner and try to create new jobs if you're constantly worried about frivolous and junk lawsuits. We need to worry about the cost of medical care. You see, it's the cost of medical care that makes it awfully hard for this country to remain competitive. As the costs go up, it's harder for small businesses to provide employment, and it's very difficult for American families as well. We need what's called association health care plans that allow small businesses to pool risk so as to better control the cost of health care. We need to expand and market health savings accounts, which will make it easier for small business to provide affordable health care to their employees. We need medical liability reform, national medical liability reform. The cost of frivolous and junk lawsuits is high on our society. It makes it harder for people to be able to employ people because it increases the cost of medicine.

We need good trade policies. It's easy to trade into America; it makes sense for us to be able to trade in other countries easily as well. Listen, we're good. We're good at growing things. We're good at manufacturing things. We ought to be selling those into—not only here at home but into other markets as well.

There needs to be less regulation out of Washington. And frankly, Governor, there needs to be less regulation out of the State level as well, so small businesses can spend time becoming more productive and employing people as opposed to spending time filling out paperwork that, in some cases, probably isn't even read.

We need to do a series of things to make sure the economy grows. And one thing for

certain we need to do is make sure there is stable, reliable tax policy. See, as I mentioned to you, the tax relief exists today, but it is going to change unless Congress acts. The child credit will go down unless Congress acts. The marriage penalty will go back up unless Congress acts. The 10 percent bracket will be affected unless Congress acts. In other words, all the tax relief that we passed is set to expire. And unless Congress acts, they will be raising taxes on the American people at a time when we shouldn't be raising taxes on the American people.

In 2005, the child credit goes down, which is a tax on the families. In 2005, the marriage penalty goes up, which is a tax on people who are married. In 2005, the 10 percent bracket is altered, which is a tax on people. We don't need to be raising taxes right now as the economy is beginning to recover. We've got plenty of money in Washington, DC, by the way. We've got to be wise about how we spend it. And by the way, in 2006, many of the small-business deductions go away, which would be a tax on small businesses.

And so I'm calling on Congress to make the tax cuts that are set to expire permanent. I would like Congress to make all tax cuts permanent. But the very minimum—at the very minimum, they need to listen to the stories up here on the stage and make those set to expire in 2005 permanent. For the sake of our economy, for the sake of American families, for the sake of small-business owners, and for the sake of job creation, the tax cuts need to be permanent.

Finally, one other thing I do want to say, and that is that we are in a changing economy. And these are exciting times, but change creates the need for government at all levels to act in a way that takes advantage of the changing times. We need to make sure our job training programs work. We need to make sure that the community college system is capable of training people for the new jobs of the 21st century, higher paying jobs, better jobs.

I saw the mayor nodding his head. He understands that a good, viable community college system, which is flexible, which matches up employer demands with curriculum to make sure there are employees available for those jobs, is really good at making sure Louisville, Kentucky, remains a viable place for people to live and to work. It's a good way to attract industry, if you've got a viable and real job training program system.

I appreciate Elaine's hard work on this. This is a major initiative of our administration, is to provide the opportunity for people to retrain so that their skills—they've got the skills necessary for the new jobs being created in this economy, and I emphasize, better paying jobs being created in this new economy.

So these are the things we're working on in Washington. But you'll be happy to hear I'm about to turn the program over to people who are actually on the frontlines of creating jobs and providing employment, and they're treating people with dignity in the workplace.

Jim is an entrepreneur. He is a risktaker. He takes risks in order to make sure his company can compete. He takes risks in order to make sure the people behind us can work. And so I appreciate being invited into a successful family-owned business that does so much good for the people that you employ and, really, so much good for the economy, because there are thousands of companies all across America who base their hopes and aspirations on dreams and success and on being a responsible citizen by providing good work for people. So, Jim, thanks for having me. Tell us your story.

[*At this point, James Kirchdorfer, Sr., chairman, ISCO Industries, made brief remarks.*]

The President. Let me just ask you a question. When you made investments, what did you do? What did you buy? Investment means somebody—you went out and purchased something. So when you hear—when people hear the word "made an investment," it means you went out and purchased. What did you buy?

Mr. Kirchdorfer. Well, to put our pipe together, it takes expensive equipment. And we do have McElroy Manufacturing here, which is where we purchased about $3 million last year of equipment. They're in Tulsa, Oklahoma, a USA company. And this equipment—when we open a new location, we need equipment to put the pipe together at those locations, so we buy more equipment.

We need people to operate the equipment, so we employ more people. So the expansion has created growth in investment and jobs.

The President. See, the tax bill we passed encouraged this company to invest. It made it easier to make the decision to spend $3 million, called bonus depreciation. That's fancy words for, we're trying to encourage Jim to make the decision to expand his business by buying new equipment. And when he buys new equipment, somebody has got to manufacture the equipment. And when somebody manufactures the equipment, it means they're working, right? And so the tax relief we passed had the effect of encouraging investment at the small-business level. And that's important because most new jobs—70 percent of new jobs, more or less, are created by small businesses like Jim's.

The second thing I want to point out is he started his business behind his dad's store. Is that right?

Mr. Kirchdorfer. Hardware store.

The President. Hardware store. You know, it's like, I started my business in my garage. You know how many times this happens in America? It is—think about a country that has got an environment that encourages people to start their business behind their dad's store. It's a really exciting part of our country, isn't it? And Government must not thwart this entrepreneurial spirit by bad tax policy, by bad medical policy, by bad regulatory policy. We need to encourage the entrepreneurial spirit. It's so hopeful to have a country where people can start their own business with a good idea.

Now, we can't guarantee success. But we can have an environment so if somebody decides to take the risk, that they can succeed and, therefore, end up employing people. I love the—are you going to employ anybody next year, you think?

Mr. Kirchdorfer. Oh, sure. We're going to add probably 30 or 40 jobs again next year—or this year.

The President. Which is good. Thirty jobs here, thirty jobs there; all around the country, small businesses are expanding because there's a sense of optimism about the future of this country. And that's how people are able to find work. And that's how we're able to provide stability in the workplace.

Speaking about that, we've got Rich Gimmel with us. He's the president—there's nothing wrong with being Mr. President—[*laughter*]—of Atlas Machine and Supply. Rich, thanks for coming.

[*Rich Gimmel made brief remarks, concluding as follows.*]

Mr. Gimmel. When my father took over the company in the late '50s, we had about 35 employees. When my brother Rob and I began to run the company together—Rob is in the front row here. He's our CEO.

The President. He's the pretty one.

Mr. Gimmel. That's right. He's the little brother with the gray hair, but he's been there longer than I have.

The President. I see. [*Laughter*]

Mr. Gimmel. But we had about 75 employees at that time. Now we have almost 170 employees at Atlas Machine. We are a very capital-intensive company. We provide——

The President. Explain what that means, "capital-intensive."

Mr. Gimmel. Well, we have to reinvest. We have to reinvest a lot in our company every year to keep it productive. We have to buy machine tools. We have to expand plant. We have to expand our facilities. We have to expand our workforce. And all of this is extremely demanding of capital.

We provide plant maintenance services in the Ohio Valley, and also, we're the compressed air and pump provider for industry in the Ohio Valley. Compressed air is vital to an industry. It's like another utility. It's as important as their electricity. If they lose their air, they're out of business, so we're the air people. We're kind of an industrial——

The President. It kind of sounds like Washington.

Mr. Gimmel. That's right. We're the air people. [*Laughter*]

The President. Is it hot air? [*Laughter*]

Mr. Gimmel. Yes, it can be.

The President. You need to tap into the Nation's Capital. [*Laughter*]

Mr. Gimmel. Maybe you guys could be supplying us. How about that?

The President. That's what I—that was my point. [*Laughter*]

[*Mr. Gimmel made additional remarks.*]

The President. Good. If somebody's listening out there, here's a shot to find work. [*Laughter*] If you're willing to work hard. Thanks for coming.

Jeannie Unruh is with us. One of the exciting things about our country is that there's a lot of companies run by very skilled women. Women-owned business is, I think, a very hopeful part of the future of this country. And I want to thank Jeannie for coming. By the way, she's a Subchapter S corporation. So when you hear the people rail on taxes and this, that, and the other—when you reduce all taxes, it affects her business. She pays taxes. Don't tax the rich—well, the so-called rich happen to be, in many cases, small businesses that are out providing opportunities for people.

Anyway, Jeannie is the head of MAC Construction & Excavating, Inc. Thanks for coming.

[*Jeannie Unruh, chief executive officer, MAC Construction & Excavating, Inc., made brief remarks.*]

The President. The country grows because people who run small businesses are confident about the future. And what I've come away with here is that these three businessowners are confident, and that's important. It bodes well for the people who are working for these companies and for those who they're going to hire.

The other thing about the tax relief plan, obviously, it affected people's lives. And I want to talk to two people whose lives were affected. I do want to remind you, however, that this year if the Congress doesn't act on making the tax cuts that expire in '05 permanent, they're raising taxes on people. You'll hear, "Let's get rid of Bush's tax plan." That's code word for, "I'm going to raise your taxes." That's what that is.

Just to give you a sense of what that means, a married couple with two children with an income of $40,000 would face a $915 tax increase in 2005 if the Congress does not act. Remember the child credit—the benefits of the child credit go away, which is like a tax increase. The marriage penalty goes back up, which is like a tax increase. And the 10 percent bracket is affected, which is a tax increase.

With us is Libby McKinney. She's got a husband and two children. She works here as a collections specialist. Libby, thank you for coming. Tell us what's on your mind.

[*Elizabeth McKinney, credit and collections specialist, ISCO Industries, made brief remarks.*]

The President. Well, that's great. Congratulations. Doing her duty, by the way. Some people spend the money; some people save the money. But it all has a positive effect on the economy. And, by the way, you can't have investment unless there's savings. And so I appreciate your story. The family saved about $1,700 because of the tax relief. We throw a lot of numbers around in Washington. That may not sound like a lot in Washington-speak; it's a lot for the family, $1,700 tax relief this year.

And by the way, I just, again, want to remind the people listening that if Congress does not act, this family will have a $725 tax increase, if Congress doesn't make the tax relief permanent. You see, they've got two children, and they're married, and the 10 percent bracket affects them. There will be a tax increase on Libby and her family. I don't think that makes sense to be raising taxes on hard-working people who are trying to get ahead and do their duty as a mom and a dad to raise their children. So, Libby, thanks for coming.

Big Rob is with us, accounting specialist Rob Hansen. Thanks for coming, Rob.

[*Robert Hansen, accounting specialist, ISCO Industries, made brief remarks.*]

The President. Good. See, he made a decision with the extra money to go out and purchase a good, and that just helps the economy. There are millions of these decisions being made on a daily basis, which is how the economy works.

I often have to argue that the tax relief was better spent than Government could have spent the money. It's a—it affected—[*applause*]. I appreciate the checks finally arriving. I was a little nervous when we said we were going to put checks in the mail. [*Laughter*] You've heard it before. [*Laughter*] It actually made it. [*Laughter*]

But if the Congress doesn't act, this family will pay $1,000 in taxes—increase. It's a tax increase. They don't make—if they don't make the child credit permanent or the marriage penalty permanent or the 10 percent bracket permanent, they pay $1,000 next year. We're running up taxes on this family, and it affects their ability to make decisions. It affects their future. It's just—it doesn't make any sense for Congress not to make the tax relief permanent. And the best way that I can possibly tell the story—they're used to me—is all they've got to do is listen to what tax relief meant for people in their lives and what tax increases would do. And so I call upon Congress to listen to the voices of the people out here struggling to get ahead in America, people who are making good decisions, people who are doing their duty as responsible citizens to love their children with all their heart, people who are putting food on the table.

I want to repeat to you what I said before. This country has overcome a lot, and we're moving forward with optimism and confidence. You know why? Because we've got great people. And I'm proud to be the leader of such a strong nation.

Thank you all for coming. God bless.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:52 a.m. at ISCO Industries. In his remarks, he referred to Senator Mitch McConnell of Kentucky, husband of Secretary of Labor Elaine L. Chao; Gov. Ernie Fletcher and Lt. Gov. Steve Pence of Kentucky; and Mayor Jerry E. Abramson of Louisville, KY.

Remarks at a Bush-Cheney Luncheon in Louisville

February 26, 2004

Thank you all for coming. Thanks for your support. Thanks for your friendship. Thanks for your warm welcome. I'm proud to be back here in the great Commonwealth of Kentucky. I'm pleased to be with so many friends.

I appreciate my friend Darrell Waltrip being here. I was at NASCAR the other day. Man, I can see why he liked that so much. [*Laughter*] It's an amazing environment. He has a lot to be proud of. He had a fabulous career. I know one of his proudest moments came when his little brother won the big race in Florida. I went through the same experience. [*Laughter*]

We're ready to go here in Kentucky. We've got a great organization. I want to thank the people who are going to man the phones and put up the signs and get the people to the polls. The Vice President and I appreciate all you did for us last time. We appreciate all you're going to do for us this time. We intend to win the State of Kentucky.

Vice President Cheney is a great Vice President. He's done a heck of a good job for our country. Our country has had no finer Vice President, although Mother may have a second opinion. No, I'm proud to have him by my side, proud to be campaigning with him.

I'm also proud of the job Laura is doing. She's a fabulous First Lady for this country. She sends her best, her best wishes and her love to our friends here in Kentucky.

I want to thank Cathy Bailey for taking on a tough job and doing such a good job.

I want to thank Elaine Chao, who is with us today, a member of my Cabinet. I think when people start to analyze an administration's effectiveness, they need to look at the people in the Cabinet. When people surround themselves with excellence—they should surround themselves with excellence, and I have. I've attracted a really good team of people from all walks of life to come to the Nation's Capital and to serve something greater than their self-interest, their country. And Elaine is part of the fabulous Cabinet I put together, and I want to thank you for being here, Elaine. And I understand why your husband is not here—he's voting. But Mitch has done a really good job for the people of Kentucky, and I'm proud to call him friend.

You need to send Jim Bunning back to Washington, DC, as well. I flew down with Anne Northup today on the plane. We had a great visit about Kentucky and the issues down here. She's a really competent, good person. I know Woody is with us; Anne had to go back and cast an important vote. I gave her permission to do so. [*Laughter*] But she really is a fine, fine Representative of the people of Louisville, Kentucky. You need to send her back too.

And I appreciate my friend the Governor being here. He's got the—I used to say the Governor was the best job in America. I'm not so sure, because you don't have much foreign policy. [*Laughter*] But it's important to have somebody who is willing to make decisions, and Ernie is that kind of person. He'll do a fine job as a Governor of this State, and I'm proud—proud, Ernie, that you ran. I appreciate you coming.

And I'm glad Steve Pence is with us, the Lieutenant Governor. And Secretary of State Trey Grayson is here as well. Senate President David Williams—he and I were just laughing about the time we campaigned in southern Kentucky in a mobile home, eating Kentucky barbecue. [*Laughter*] Gosh, I hope I get some on the plane going back. But good to see David. And Dick Roeding is with us as well. I appreciate the local and State officials who have come today.

I want to thank Mike Duncan and Ellen Williams, great friends of mine who are helping steer this party to victory. I want to thank my friend Mercer Reynolds, who is the national finance chairman—he's from Cincinnati, Ohio—who has taken time out of his busy life to help make sure that we're ready to go, that when the bell rings, this campaign is fully funded and ready to take our message across the country.

You know, we meet here during the Presidential primary season. We're witnessing a clear trend. It looks like we have a winner in the Republican primaries. [*Laughter*] The other party's nomination battle is still playing out. They're an interesting group with a lot of strong differences of opinion. They're for tax cuts and against them, for NAFTA and against NAFTA, for the PATRIOT Act, against the PATRIOT Act, in favor of liberating Iraq and opposed to it. And that's just one Senator from Massachusetts.

They haven't—they're not finished selecting their nominee. Yet this much is certain: Come November, the voters are going to have a very clear choice. It's a choice between keeping the tax relief that is moving the economy forward or putting the burden of higher taxes back on the American people. It is a choice between an America that leads the world with strength and confidence or an America that is uncertain in the face of danger. I look forward to setting these alternatives squarely before the American people. I look forward to the campaign.

We have a record of historic achievement. And most importantly, we have a positive vision for the years ahead, for winning the war against terror, for extending peace and freedom throughout our world, and for creating jobs and opportunity here at home. We will leave no doubt where we stand, and we will win on the 2nd of November.

The last 3 years have brought serious challenges, and we have given serious answers. We came to office with an economy heading into recession. We delivered historic tax relief, and now our economy is the fastest growing of any major industrialized nation. We had to confront corporate crimes that cost people their jobs and their savings, so we passed strong corporate reforms and we made it abundantly clear we will not tolerate dishonesty in the boardrooms of America.

We saw war and grief arrive on a quiet September morning, so we have pursued the terrorist enemy across the world and have captured or killed many key leaders of the Al Qaida network. And the rest of them will learn there is no cave or hole deep enough to hide from American justice.

We confronted the dangers of state-sponsored terror and the spread of weapons of mass destruction, so we ended two of the most violent and dangerous regimes on Earth. We freed more than 50 million people in those two countries. Once again, America is proud to lead the armies of liberation.

When Dick Cheney and I came to Washington, we found a military that was underfunded and underappreciated, so we gave our military the resources and respect they deserve. And today, no one in the world can question the skill and the strength and the spirit of the United States military.

When we came to office, people had gotten used to gridlock and old problems were used to score points. Old problems were politicized and debated and just—then just passed on from year to year. But we didn't come to Washington to do things the Washington way. We came to get some things done. We passed major reforms to raise standards in public schools all across America. We passed reforms in Medicare to get

prescription drugs and choice to senior citizens. We chose to lead, and we have delivered results for the American people.

Here's what I believe: It is the President's job to confront problems, not to pass them on to future Presidents and future generations. A President needs to step up, make the hard decisions, and keep his commitments. And that is how I will continue to lead our country.

Great events will turn on this election. The man who sits in the Oval Office will set the course of the war on terror and the direction of our economy. The security and prosperity of America are at stake. Our opponents have not offered much in the way of strategies to win the war or policies to expand the economy. So far, all we hear is a lot of old bitterness and partisan anger. Anger is not an agenda for the future of America. We will take on the big issues with optimism and resolve and determination. We stand ready to lead our country for the next 4 years.

A big issue for every family in America is the Federal tax burden. With the largest tax relief since Ronald Reagan was the President, we have left more money in the hands of those who earned it. By spending and investing, people have helped to move this economy forward. More people are finding work. The American people have used their money far better than the Government would have.

Our opponents have their own plan for the tax cuts. They plan to take them away. They will use that money to expand the Federal Government. I have a better idea. To keep the economy growing, we must have fiscal discipline in Washington, DC. To keep the economy growing, the tax cuts must be permanent.

We must do more. We need to protect small-business owners and employees from frivolous lawsuits and needless regulation. We need to control the costs of health care by passing medical liability reform. We need to pass sound energy legislation to modernize our electricity system and to make America less dependent on foreign sources of energy. Our opponents talk about job creation, but they're against every one of these job-creating measures. Empty talk about jobs won't get anybody hired. The way to create jobs is through our pro-growth, pro-entrepreneurial economic agenda.

This economy of ours is going through a time of challenge and change, and we're helping people to gain the skills and security to make a good living and to look forward to a good retirement. All skills start with education. That's why I was so insistent that Congress pass the No Child Left Behind Act. It is a good law, a sound piece of legislation, historic reform that brings high standards and accountability to every classroom in America.

There's more to do. We have a plan to help high school students who fall behind in reading and math. We have plans to make sure our community colleges train workers for the industries that are creating the most new jobs. Education is the gateway to a hopeful future, and that gate must be open to all Americans.

This administration is also working toward an ownership society in which more people own their own homes to build their own savings. We want more people owning their own small businesses. We want people owning and managing their health care plans. We want younger workers to own and manage their retirement under Social Security. When people have solid assets, they gain independence and security and dignity and more control over their future. I believe so strongly in private property, I want every American to own some.

On issue after issue, the American people have a clear choice. Our opponents are against personal retirement accounts. They're against putting patients in charge of Medicare. They're against tax relief. They seem to be against every idea that gives Americans more authority and more choices and more control over our own lives. It's the same old Washington mindset. They'll give the orders, and you will pay the bills. I've got news for them. America has gone beyond that way of thinking, and we're not going back. Inherent in all our policies is this theme, this belief: We trust the people, not Washington politicians, to make the best decisions for their own money, their own health, their own retirement, and their own lives.

Our future also depends on America's leadership in the world. The momentum of freedom in our time is strong, but we still face serious dangers. Al Qaida is wounded, but not broken. Terrorists are testing our will in Afghanistan and Iraq. Regimes in North Korea and Iran are challenging the peace. If America shows weakness and uncertainty in this decade, the world will drift toward tragedy. This will not happen on my watch.

No friend or enemy today doubts the word of the United States. This Nation is strong. We are steadfast. We are confident in the cause of freedom. America and our allies gave an ultimatum to the terror regime in Afghanistan. The Taliban chose defiance. The Taliban are no longer in power. America and our allies gave an ultimatum to the terror regime in Iraq. The dictator chose defiance. The dictator now sits in a prison cell.

September the 11th, 2001, taught a lesson I have not forgotten. America must confront threats before they fully materialize. In Iraq, my administration looked at the intelligence, and we saw a danger. Members of Congress looked at the intelligence, and they saw danger. The United Nations Security Council looked at the intelligence; it saw a danger. The previous administration and Congress looked at the intelligence and made regime change in Iraq the policy of our country.

In 2002, the United Nations Security Council yet again demanded a full accounting of Saddam Hussein's weapons programs. And as he had for over a decade, Saddam Hussein refused to comply. So we had a choice to make, either to take the word of a madman or take action to defend America and the world. Faced with that choice, I will defend America every time.

Others would have chosen differently. They now agree that the world is better off with Saddam removed from power. They just didn't support removing him from power. [*Laughter*] Maybe they were hoping he would lose the next Iraqi election. [*Laughter*]

We showed the dictator and the watching world that America means what it says. Because our coalition acted, Saddam's torture chambers are closed. Because we acted, Iraq's weapons programs are ended forever. Because we acted, nations like Libya have gotten the message and renounced their own weapons programs. Because we acted, an example of democracy is rising at the very heart of the Middle East. Because we acted, the world is more free and America is more secure.

We still face thugs and terrorists in Iraq who would rather go on killing the innocent than accept the advance of liberty. They know that a free Iraq will be a major defeat for the cause of terror. This collection of killers is trying to shake the will of America. America will never be intimidated by thugs and assassins.

We're aggressively striking the terrorists in Iraq, defeating them there so we don't have to face them in our own country. We're calling on other nations to help Iraq build a free society, which makes all of us more safe. We're standing with the Iraqi people as they assume more of their own defense and move toward self-government. These aren't easy tasks, but they are essential tasks. We will finish what we have begun. And we will win this essential victory in the war on terror.

On national security, Americans have the clearest possible choice. Opponents say they approve of bold action in the world, but only if no other government disagrees. I'm all for united action, and so are the 34 coalition partners we have in Iraq right now. Yet America must never outsource America's national security decision to leaders of other governments.

Some of our opponents are skeptical that the war on terror is really a war at all. They view terrorism more as a crime, a problem to be solved with law enforcement and indictments. Our Nation followed that approach after the World Trade Center was bombed in 1993. The matter was handled in the courts and thought by some to be settled. Terrorists were still training in Afghanistan, still plotting in other nations, and drawing up more ambitious plans. After the chaos and carnage of September the 11th, it is not enough to serve our enemies with legal papers. With those attacks, the terrorists and supporters declared war on the United States of America, and war is what they got.

At bases across our country and the world, I've had the privilege of meeting with the men and women of our military who are defending this country, who are sacrificing for

our security. I've seen their great decency, their unselfish courage. And I can assure you, ladies and gentlemen, the cause of freedom is in good hands.

Our Nation is prosperous and we are strong, yet we need to remember that our greatest strength is in the hearts and souls of our citizens. We're strong because of the values we try to live by, courage and compassion, reverence and integrity. We're strong because of the institutions that help to give us direction and purpose, families and schools and religious congregations. These values and institutions are fundamental to our lives, and they deserve the respect of our Government.

We stand for fair treatment of faith-based groups so they can receive Federal support for their works of compassion and healing. We will not stand for Government discrimination against people of faith. We stand for welfare reforms that require work and strengthen marriage, which have helped millions of Americans find independence and dignity. We will not stand for any attempt to weaken those reforms and to send people back into the lives of dependence.

We stand for a culture of life in which every person counts and every person matters. We will not stand for the treatment of any life as a commodity to be experimented upon or exploited or cloned. We stand for the confirmation of judges who strictly and faithfully interpret the law. We will not stand for judges who undermine democracy by legislating from the bench or try to remake the culture of America by court order.

We stand for a culture of responsibility in America. We're changing the culture in this country from one that has said, "If it feels good, do it," and "If you've got a problem, blame somebody else," to a culture in which each of us understands we're responsible for the decisions we make in life. If you are fortunate enough to be a mother or a father, you're responsible for loving your child with all your heart. If you're worried about the quality of the education in the community in which you live, you're responsible for doing something about it. If you're a CEO in corporate America, you're responsible for telling the truth to your shareholders and your employees. And in this new responsibility society, each of us is responsible for loving our neighbor just like we'd like to be loved ourself.

For all Americans, these years in our history will always stand apart. There are quiet times in the life of the Nation when little is expected of our leaders. This is not one of those times. You and I are living in a period when the stakes are high, the challenges are difficult, the choices are clear, a time where resolve is needed. None of us will ever forget that week when one era ended and another began.

On September the 14th, 2001, I stood in the ruins of the Twin Towers. I remember a lot about that day. Workers in hardhats were shouting, "Whatever it takes." I remember a guy pointing at me and saying, "Don't let me down." As we did all—as we all did that day, the men and women who were searching through the rubble took it personally. I took it personally. I have a great responsibility that goes on. I will never relent in bringing justice to our enemies. I will defend the security of America, whatever it takes.

In these times, I've also been a witness to the character of this Nation. Not long ago, some had their doubts about the American character, a capacity to meet serious challenges, capacity to serve a cause greater than self-interest. Americans have given their answer. I've seen the unselfish courage of our troops. I've seen the heroism of Americans in the face of danger. I've seen the spirit of service and compassion renewed in our country. We all have seen our Nation unite in common purpose when it mattered most.

We will need all of these qualities for the work ahead. We have a war to win. And the world is counting on us to lead the cause of freedom and peace. We have a duty to spread opportunity to every part of America. This is the work that history has set before us. We welcome it. And we know that for our country, the best days lie ahead.

May God bless you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:35 p.m. at the Galt House Hotel. In his remarks, he referred to NASCAR drivers Darrell and Michael Waltrip; Cathy Bailey, national committeewoman, Mike Duncan, national committeeman, and Ellen Williams, chairperson, Republican Party of Kentucky;

Senator Mitch McConnell of Kentucky, husband of Secretary of Labor Elaine L. Chao; Robert Wood "Woody" Northup, husband of Representative Anne M. Northup; Gov. Ernie Fletcher and Lt. Gov. Steve Pence of Kentucky; Kentucky Secretary of State Trey Grayson; David Williams, president, and Richard L. Roeding, president pro tem, Kentucky State Senate; and Mercer Reynolds, national finance chairman, Bush-Cheney '04, Inc.

Statement on House Passage of the "Unborn Victims of Violence Act of 2004"

February 26, 2004

I applaud the House for passing the "Unborn Victims of Violence Act" today by a strong bipartisan vote. We must continue to build a culture of life in our country, a compassionate society in which every child is born into a loving family and protected by law.

Pregnant women who have been harmed by violence, and their families, know that there are two victims—the mother and the unborn child—and both victims should be protected by Federal law.

I urge the Senate to pass this bill so that I can sign it into law.

NOTE: The statement referred to H.R. 1997.

Proclamation 7757—Expanding the Scope of the National Emergency and Invocation of Emergency Authority Relating to the Regulation of the Anchorage and Movement of Vessels Into Cuban Territorial Waters

February 26, 2004

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

By the authority vested in me by the Constitution and the laws of the United States of America, in order to expand the scope of the national emergency declared in Proclamation 6867 of March 1, 1996, based on the disturbance or threatened disturbance of the international relations of the United States caused by actions taken by the Cuban government, and in light of steps taken over the past year by the Cuban government to worsen the threat to United States international relations, and,

Whereas the United States has determined that Cuba is a state-sponsor of terrorism and it is subject to the restrictions of section 6(j)(1)(A) of the Export Administration Act of 1979, section 620A of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, and section 40 of the Arms Export Control Act;

Whereas the Cuban government has demonstrated a ready and reckless willingness to use excessive force, including deadly force, against U.S. citizens, in the ostensible enforcement of its sovereignty, including the February 1996 shoot-down of two unarmed U.S.-registered civilian aircraft in international airspace, resulting in the deaths of three American citizens and one other individual;

Whereas the Cuban government has demonstrated a ready and reckless willingness to use excessive force, including deadly force, against U.S. citizens and its own citizens, including on July 13, 1995, when persons in U.S.-registered vessels that entered into Cuban territorial waters suffered injury as a result of the reckless use of force against them by the Cuban military, and including the July 1994 sinking of an unarmed Cuban-registered vessel, resulting in the deaths of 41 Cuban citizens;

Whereas the Cuban government has impounded U.S.-registered vessels in Cuban ports and forced the owners, as a condition of release, to violate U.S. law by requiring payments to be made to the Cuban government;

Whereas the entry of any U.S.-registered vessels into Cuban territorial waters could result in injury to, or loss of life of, persons engaged in that conduct, due to the potential use of excessive force, including deadly force, against them by the Cuban military, and could threaten a disturbance of international relations;

Whereas the unauthorized entry of vessels subject to the jurisdiction of the United

States into Cuban territorial waters is in violation of U.S. law and contrary to U.S. policy;

Whereas the objectives of U.S. policy regarding Cuba are the end of the dictatorship and a rapid, peaceful transition to a representative democracy respectful of human rights and characterized by an open market economic system;

Whereas a critical initiative by the United States to advance these U.S. objectives is to deny resources to the repressive Cuban government, resources that may be used by that government to support terrorist activities and carry out excessive use of force against innocent victims, including U.S. citizens;

Whereas the unauthorized entry of U.S.-registered vessels into Cuban territorial waters is detrimental to the foreign policy of the United States, which is to deny monetary and material support to the repressive Cuban government, and, therefore, such unauthorized entries threaten to disturb the international relations of the United States by facilitating the Cuban government's support of terrorism, use of excessive force, and continued existence;

Whereas the Cuban government has over the course of its 45-year existence repeatedly used violence and the threat of violence to undermine U.S. policy interests. This same regime continues in power today, and has since 1959 maintained a pattern of hostile actions contrary to U.S. policy interests. Among other things, the Cuban government established a military alliance with the Soviet Union, and invited Soviet forces to install nuclear missiles in Cuba capable of attacking the United States, and encouraged Soviet authorities to use those weapons against the United States; it engaged in military adventurism in Africa; and it helped to form and provide material and political support to terrorist organizations that sought the violent overthrow of democratically elected governments in Central America and elsewhere in the hemisphere allied with the United States, thereby causing repeated disturbances of U.S. international relations;

Whereas the Cuban government has recently and over the last year taken a series of steps to destabilize relations with the United States, including threatening to abrogate the Migration Accords with the United States and to close the U.S. Interests Section, and Cuba's most senior officials repeatedly asserting that the United States intended to invade Cuba, despite explicit denials from the U.S. Secretaries of State and Defense that such action is planned, thereby causing a sudden and worsening disturbance of U.S. international relations;

Whereas U.S. concerns about these unforeseen Cuban government actions that threaten to disturb international relations were sufficiently grave that on May 8, 2003, the United States warned the Cuban government that political manipulations that resulted in a mass migration would be viewed as a "hostile act;"

Now, Therefore, I, George W. Bush, President of the United States of America, by the authority vested in me by the Constitution and the laws of the United States of America, including section 1 of title II of Public Law 65–24, ch. 30, June 15, 1917, as amended (50 U.S.C. 191), sections 201 and 301 of the National Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C. 1601 *et seq.*), and section 301 of title 3, United States Code, in order to expand the scope of the national emergency declared in Proclamation 6867 of March 1, 1996, and to secure the observance of the rights and obligations of the United States, hereby authorize and direct the Secretary of Homeland Security (the "Secretary") to make and issue such rules and regulations as the Secretary may find appropriate to regulate the anchorage and movement of vessels, and authorize and approve the Secretary's issuance of such rules and regulations, as authorized by the Act of June 15, 1917.

Section 1. The Secretary may make rules and regulations governing the anchorage and movement of any vessel, foreign or domestic, in the territorial waters of the United States, which may be used, or is susceptible of being used, for voyage into Cuban territorial waters and that may create unsafe conditions, or result in unauthorized transactions, and thereby threaten a disturbance of international relations. Any rule or regulation issued pursuant to this proclamation may be effective immediately upon issuance as such rule or regulation shall involve a foreign affairs function of the United States.

Sec. 2. The Secretary is authorized to inspect any vessel, foreign or domestic, in the territorial waters of the United States, at any time; to place guards on any such vessel; and, with my consent expressly hereby granted, take full possession and control of any such vessel and remove the officers and crew and all other persons not specifically authorized by the Secretary to go or remain on board the vessel when necessary to secure the rights and obligations of the United States.

Sec. 3. The Secretary may request assistance from such departments, agencies, officers, or instrumentalities of the United States as the Secretary deems necessary to carry out the purposes of this proclamation. Such departments, agencies, officers, or instrumentalities shall, consistent with other provisions of law and to the extent practicable, provide requested assistance.

Sec. 4. The Secretary may seek assistance from State and local authorities in carrying out the purposes of this proclamation. Because State and local assistance may be essential for an effective response to this emergency, I urge all State and local officials to cooperate with Federal authorities and to take all actions within their lawful authority necessary to prevent the unauthorized departure of vessels intending to enter Cuban territorial waters.

Sec. 5. All powers and authorities delegated by this proclamation to the Secretary may be delegated by the Secretary to other officers and agents of the United States Government unless otherwise prohibited by law.

Sec. 6. Any provisions of Proclamation 6867 that are inconsistent with the provisions of this proclamation are superseded to the extent of such inconsistency.

Sec. 7. This proclamation shall be immediately transmitted to the Congress and published in the *Federal Register*.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand this twenty-sixth day of February, in the year of our Lord two thousand four, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twenty-eighth.

George W. Bush

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 8:45 a.m., February 27, 2004]

NOTE: This proclamation was published in the *Federal Register* on March 1.

Notice—Continuation of the National Emergency Relating to Cuba and of the Emergency Authority Relating to the Regulation of the Anchorage and Movement of Vessels

February 26, 2004

On March 1, 1996, by Proclamation 6867, a national emergency was declared to address the disturbance or threatened disturbance of international relations caused by the February 24, 1996, destruction by the Cuban government of two unarmed U.S.-registered civilian aircraft in international airspace north of Cuba. In July 1996 and on subsequent occasions, the Cuban Government stated its intent to forcefully defend its sovereignty against any U.S.-registered vessels or aircraft that might enter Cuban territorial waters or airspace while involved in a flotilla or peaceful protest. Since these events, the Cuban government has not demonstrated that it will refrain from the future use of reckless and excessive force against U.S. vessels or aircraft that may engage in memorial activities or peaceful protest north of Cuba. Therefore, in accordance with section 202(d) of the National Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C. 1622(d)), I am continuing the national emergency with respect to Cuba and the emergency authority relating to the regulation of the anchorage and movement of vessels set out in Proclamation 6867.

This notice shall be published in the *Federal Register* and transmitted to the Congress.

George W. Bush

The White House,
February 26, 2004.

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 11:26 a.m., February 26, 2004]

NOTE: This notice was published in the *Federal Register* on February 27.

Message to the Congress on Continuation and Expansion of the National Emergency With Respect to Cuba

February 26, 2004

To the Congress of the United States:

Pursuant to section 1 of title I of Public Law 65-24, ch. 30, 50 U.S.C. 191, and sections 201 and 301 of the National Emergencies Act, 50 U.S.C. 1601 *et seq.,* I hereby report that I have exercised my statutory authority to continue the national emergency declared in Proclamation 6867 of March 1, 1996, in response to the Cuban government's destruction of two unarmed U.S.-registered civilian aircraft in international airspace north of Cuba. Additionally, I have exercised my authority to expand the scope of the national emergency as, over the last year, the Cuban government, which is a designated state-sponsor of terrorism, has taken a series of steps to destabilize relations with the United States, including threatening to abrogate the Migration Accords with the United States and to close the U.S. Interests Section. This conduct has caused a sudden and worsening disturbance of U.S. international relations.

In my proclamation (copy attached), I have authorized and directed the Secretary of Homeland Security to make and issue such rules and regulations that the Secretary may find appropriate to prevent unauthorized U.S. vessels from entering Cuban territorial waters.

I have authorized these rules and regulations as a result of the Cuban government's demonstrated willingness to use reckless force, including deadly force, in the ostensible enforcement of its sovereignty. I have also authorized these rules and regulations in an effort to deny resources to the repressive Cuban government that may be used by that government to support terrorist activities and carry out excessive use of force against innocent victims, including U.S. citizens and other persons residing in the United States, and threaten a disturbance of international relations. Accordingly, I have continued and expanded the national emergency in response to these threats.

George W. Bush

The White House,
February 26, 2004.

Memorandum on Determination That the Government of Pakistan Is Cooperating With the United States in the Global War on Terrorism

February 26, 2004

Presidential Determination No. 2004–25

Memorandum for the Secretary of State

Subject: Determination that the Government of Pakistan is Cooperating with the United States in the Global War on Terrorism

Consistent with the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the United States, including the Emergency Supplemental Appropriations Act for Defense and for the Reconstruction of Iraq and Afghanistan, 2004 (Public Law 108–106) (the "Act"), I hereby determine for the purposes of that Act that the Government of Pakistan is cooperating with the United States in the Global War on Terrorism.

You are authorized and directed to report this determination to the Congress and to arrange for its publication in the *Federal Register.*

George W. Bush

Remarks Following Discussions With Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder of Germany and an Exchange With Reporters

February 27, 2004

President Bush. There will be opening statements. We'll take two questions per side, alternating.

Mr. Chancellor, welcome back. It's good to see you. We've just had a really constructive dialog about our mutual interests, our mutual desires to work together. When Germany and America work together, the world is a better place. We're both committed to

freedom. We're both committed to peace. We're both committed to the prosperity of our respective people. And this is an important visit, and I'm glad you're here. And I appreciate our ability to work together on a lot of fronts.

I told the Chancellor I was particularly grateful for German presence in Afghanistan. They're making a very constructive—playing a constructive role and making sure that country is able to survive in a—as a free nation. And it's important that Afghanistan succeed, and we really appreciate it.

We talked about Iraq, and we talked about the Middle East, and we talked about North Korea. We discussed a lot of subjects.

And so, Mr. Chancellor, welcome back.

Chancellor Schroeder. Thank you, Mr. President. Indeed, I'm very pleased to be here once again. And indeed, we talked about—not about the past; we very much agreed on that. We have to talk about the present and the future now. We both have a great interest in seeing a stable and democratic Iraq develop.

And you're right; you mentioned the important part that Germany is playing in Afghanistan. It is a contribution that we make. It is a contribution that we also make in the fight against international terrorism, and we intend to continue to make that contribution.

We also talked about international issues, especially a settlement of the Middle East problems and the conflicts there. We very much agreed on that. Whenever one pursues a broader outline and a broader approach here, one has not to lose sight of the fact that a settlement of the conflict between the Israelis and the Palestinians is necessary if one wants to bring peace to this region.

It was indeed a very good meeting, Mr. President, and we very much agreed on that we now have to face up to the challenges of the 21st century.

Constitutional Amendment on Marriage

President Bush. Jennifer [Jennifer Loven, Associated Press].

Q. Thank you, sir. I'd like to ask you about gay marriage. What do you believe same-sex weddings—how do they actually threaten the institution of marriage in general? And also, are you concerned at all about being considered on the wrong side of the civil rights issue?

President Bush. This is a—yes, this is a difficult issue here for a lot of people in America. I believed it was important to act because the institution of marriage was being changed by courts. And it's an issue that's very sensitive. And the voice of the people need to be heard, and the constitutional process was the best way to do such.

I believe that marriage has served society well, and I believe it is important to affirm that, that marriage between a man and a woman is the ideal. And the job of the President is to drive policy toward the ideal. This is a sensitive debate, and it is important that people hold true to their beliefs without condemning anybody else. And so therefore, I call upon all sides in the debate to conduct themselves with dignity and honor and respect. But this is a debate that the Nation must have. And the people's voice must be heard in the debate.

Germany-U.S. Relations

Q. Mr. President, your father mentioned Germany as partner in leadership. Is this still the case? And how would you describe the personal relationship between Chancellor Schroeder and yourself?

President Bush. The Chancellor has got a good sense of humor and, therefore, he is able to make me laugh. And a person that can make me laugh is a person who is easy to be with. And a person who is easy to be with means I've got a comfortable relationship with him. We have differences in the past. But there's nothing wrong with friends having differences. And we have both committed to put the differences behind us and move forward. Germany is an important nation, and Germany occupies an important place in Europe. And it's essential that America have good relations with Europe. Not only do we share values; we share economic interests. We have the capacity to help keep the peace. And so I would say our relations are good.

Q. Partner in leadership?

President Bush. Partner in leadership, that's right. We're partnering in leadership in Afghanistan. We're partnering when it comes to dealing with disease——

Chancellor Schroeder. The Balkans.

President Bush. The Balkans. There's no question we differed on Iraq; we don't differ on whether Iraq ought to be free and peaceful. And so, no, I look forward to good relations—continued good relations with Germany and Gerhard Schroeder.

Steve [Steve Holland, Reuters].

Situation in Haiti

Q. Mr. President, would it help settle things in Haiti if President Aristide were to resign?

President Bush. The Secretary of State has made some comments. Let me follow up on those by saying that we're interested in achieving a political settlement, and we're still working to that effect. We're also, at the same time, planning for a multinational force that would go in and make sure that if aid needed to be delivered or there needed to be some stability, that it could go in, dependent upon a political settlement.

Freedom and Democracy in the Middle East

Q. Mr. President, what do you expect Germany's cooperative role to be in the Middle East initiative that you plan to do at the G–8 Summit?

President Bush. I think it's—the Chancellor and I were talking about the need to help promote the institutions for free societies to develop. We both understand that the office we hold is always bigger than the occupant. And whether it be in the Palestinian territories or elsewhere in the Middle East, it is essential, first and foremost, to put institutions in place that survive the whims of men and women.

And so we share this common belief that it's important to get the structure right in order for free societies to develop. That's why the Bonn Conference, for example, relating to Afghanistan, was so important, because it began the process of putting the institutions in place for a free Afghanistan to exist. And the Chancellor understands that.

There's a lot of work we can do. There's some skepticism as to whether or not people in the Middle East can self-govern. I strongly reject that skepticism, and I might call it criticism if people hold that attitude, because I believe that freedom is inherently a part of every soul and that if given the proper structure and proper institutions, people can self-govern. And a self-governing Middle East, one based upon freedom and democracy, will make the world more peaceful. It's a legacy that we need to work on in order to help change the habits of violence and fear and frustration that had spawned terror in the Middle East.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:55 a.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. Chancellor Schroeder spoke in German, and his remarks were translated by an interpreter. A reporter referred to President Jean-Bertrand Aristide of Haiti. A portion of these remarks could not be verified because the tape was incomplete.

The German-American Alliance for the 21st Century: Joint Statement by President George W. Bush and Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder

February 27, 2004

Today, we pay tribute to the deep friendship between the German and American people. The sacrifices of two generations, and the visionary leadership of our forebears, created the conditions for a Europe whole, free, and at peace at the dawn of the 21st century.

We renew our determination to work together, and with our friends and allies in Europe and beyond, to achieve a more secure, prosperous, and just world. We are committed to strengthen transatlantic relations, and act in common purpose to address the challenges before us.

The foundation of German and American relations remains our shared commitment to the values of freedom, democracy, and the rule of law, and to economic opportunity and prosperity through free and open markets. These are fundamental to our own societies, and to our common efforts in meeting the great challenges of a new era: the nexus of threats posed by terrorism, weapons of mass destruction, tyranny, poverty, the lack of opportunity, and violent extremism.

In this spirit, we commit our nations to an ambitious goal, rooted in our shared values and experience: to promote freedom, democracy, human dignity, the rule of law, economic opportunity, and security in the Greater Middle East. Fear and resentment must be replaced with freedom and hope.

We must build a genuine partnership, connecting Europe and America with the wider Middle East, aimed at cooperating with the countries and peoples of that region to achieve these just objectives, and to live side by side in peace. Together with our friends and allies in Europe and the Greater Middle East, we will coordinate our efforts closely to respond to calls for reform in the region, and to develop specific proposals to put before the G8, U.S.-EU, and NATO Summit meetings, which will be held in June 2004.

At the same time, we reaffirm our commitment to the vision of two states—Israel and Palestine—living side by side in peace and security, and renew our commitment to the "Roadmap" as the best means of moving forward toward that goal.

We pledge to enhance the international effort to help the people of Afghanistan restore peace and security in their nation, including by the further expansion of NATO's International Security Assistance Force. We will also work together to achieve success at the upcoming international conference on Afghanistan, hosted by Germany. We welcome the agreement on a new constitution for Afghanistan, and place particular emphasis on creating the conditions for free, fair and peaceful elections in Afghanistan later this year.

We are united in support of a free Iraq: a secure, unified, democratic, and fully sovereign nation, at peace with itself and its neighbors that will contribute to world peace and stability. We welcome and support the vital and growing role of the United Nations in Iraq, and look forward to the transfer of sovereignty to a new Iraqi government on July 1, 2004.

We are resolved to strengthen our economic relations by increasing opportunities for trade and investment between the European Union and the United States, and by promoting trade liberalization and economic development for all countries through the Doha Development Agenda negotiations. In the framework of the G8, we will cooperate to help the poorest countries benefit more fully from the global economy. We remain committed to our joint fight against poverty in the world, and we also undertake to tackle the scourge of HIV/AIDS and to cooperate to improve the world environment.

We reaffirm our commitment to NATO as the anchor of our collective defense and an essential forum for transatlantic consultations. We underscore our support for the continuing process of European integration and stress the importance of Europe and America working together as partners in a community of shared values. We welcome the historic enlargement of both NATO and the European Union, which takes place this spring, advancing our goal to erase decades of division in Europe.

With a common agenda of action, the German-American alliance will prove as critical to the advance of freedom, security, and prosperity in the 21st Century as it was in the second half of the 20th Century.

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

Statement on the Death of President Boris Trajkovski of Macedonia

February 27, 2004

Laura and I are saddened by the death of President Boris Trajkovski of Macedonia, a distinguished leader and a great friend of the United States. On behalf of the American people, I extend condolences to President Trajkovski's family and to the people of Macedonia.

President Trajkovski showed extraordinary courage in leading his country from the brink of civil conflict to peace by signing the Ohrid Framework Agreement. The United States strongly supports President Trajkovski's vision of a multi-ethnic, democratic Macedonia at peace with itself and its neighbors and on the path to full membership in the transatlantic community.

Executive Order 13331—National and Community Service Programs

February 27, 2004

By the authority vested in me as President by the Constitution and the laws of the United States of America, and to strengthen the ability of programs authorized under the national service laws to build and reinforce a culture of service, citizenship, and responsibility throughout our Nation, and to institute reforms to improve accountability and efficiency in the administration of those programs, it is hereby ordered as follows:

Section 1. *Definitions.* For purposes of this order:

(a) "National service laws" means the National and Community Service Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 12501 *et seq.*) and the Domestic Volunteer Service Act of 1973 (42 U.S.C. 4950 *et seq.*);

(b) "National and community service programs" means those programs authorized under the national service laws;

(c) "Policies governing programs authorized under the national service laws" refers to all policies, programs, guidelines, and regulations, including official guidance and internal agency procedures and practices, that are issued by the Corporation for National and Community Service (Corporation) and have significant effects on national and community service programs; and

(d) "Professional corps programs" means those programs described in section 122(a)(8) of the National and Community Service Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 12572(a)(8)).

Sec. 2. *Fundamental Principles and Policymaking Criteria.* In formulating and implementing policies governing programs authorized under the national service laws, the Corporation shall, to the extent permitted by law, adhere to the following fundamental principles:

(a) National and community service programs should support and encourage greater engagement of Americans in volunteering;

(b) National and community service programs should be more responsive to State and local needs;

(c) National and community service programs should make Federal support more accountable and more effective; and

(d) National and community service programs should expand opportunities for involvement of faith-based and other community organizations.

Sec. 3. *Agency Implementation.* (a) The Chief Executive Officer of the Corporation for National and Community Service (Chief Executive Officer) shall, in coordination with the USA Freedom Corps Council, review and evaluate existing policies governing national and community service programs in order to assess the consistency of such policies with the fundamental principles and policymaking criteria described in section 2 of this order.

(b) The Chief Executive Officer shall ensure that all policies governing national and community service programs issued by the Corporation are consistent with the fundamental principles and policymaking criteria described in section 2 of this order. To that end, the Chief Executive Officer shall, to the extent permitted by law,

(i) amend all such existing policies to ensure that they are consistent with the fundamental principles and policymaking criteria articulated in section 2 of this order; and

(ii) where appropriate, implement new policies that are consistent with and necessary to further the fundamental principles and policymaking criteria set forth in section 2 of this order.

(c) In developing implementation steps, the Chief Executive Officer should address, at a minimum, the following objectives:

(i) National and community service programs should leverage Federal resources to maximize support from the private sector and from State and local governments, with an emphasis on reforms that enhance programmatic flexibility, reduce administrative burdens, and calibrate Federal assistance to the respective needs of recipient organizations;

(ii) National and community service programs should leverage Federal resources to enable the recruitment and effective management of a larger number of volunteers than is currently possible;

(iii) National and community service programs should increase efforts to expand opportunities for, and strengthen the capacity of, faith-based and other community organizations in building and strengthening an infrastructure to support volunteers that meet community needs;

(iv) National and community service programs should adopt performance measures to identify those practices that merit replication and further investment, as well as to ensure accountability;

(v) National and community service programs should, consistent with the principles of Federalism and the constitutional role of the States and Indian tribes, promote innovation, flexibility, and results at all levels of government;

(vi) National and community service programs based in schools should employ tutors who meet required paraprofessional qualifications, and use such practices and methodologies as are required for supplemental educational services;

(vii) National and community service programs should foster a lifetime of citizenship and civic engagement among those who serve;

(viii) National and community service programs should avoid or eliminate practices that displace volunteers who are not supported under the national service laws; and

(ix) Guidelines for the selection of national and community service programs should recognize the importance of professional corps programs in light of the fundamental principles and policymaking criteria set forth in this order.

Sec. 4. *Management Reforms.* (a) The Corporation should implement internal management reforms to strengthen its oversight of national and community service programs through enforcement of performance and compliance standards and other management tools.

(b) Management reforms should include, but should not be limited to, the following:

(i) Institutionalized changes to the budgetary and grant-making processes to ensure that financial commitments remain within available resources;

(ii) Enhanced accounting and management systems that would ensure compliance with fiscal restrictions and provide timely, accurate, and readily available information about enrollment in AmeriCorps and about funding and obligations incurred for all national and community service programs;

(iii) Assurance by the Chief Executive Officer and the Chief Financial Officer in the Corporation's Management Representation Letter that its financial statements, including the Statement of Budgetary Resources, are accurate and reliable; and

(iv) Management reforms that tie employee performance to fiscal responsibility, attainment of management goals, and professional conduct.

Sec. 5. *Report.* Within 180 days after the date of this order, the Chief Executive Officer shall report to the President, through the Assistant to the President and Director of the USA Freedom Corps Office, the actions the Corporation proposes to undertake to accomplish the objectives set forth in this order.

Sec. 6. *Judicial Review.* This order is not intended to, and does not, create any right or benefit, substantive or procedural, enforceable at law or in equity by a party against the United States, its departments, agencies, or other entities, its officers or employees, or any other person.

George W. Bush

The White House,
February 27, 2004.

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 8:45 a.m., March 2, 2004]

NOTE: This Executive order will be published in the *Federal Register* on March 3.

Digest of Other White House Announcements

The following list includes the President's public schedule and other items of general interest announced by the Office of the Press Secretary and not included elsewhere in this issue.

February 21

In the morning, the President had an intelligence briefing.

February 23

In the morning, the President had an intelligence briefing.

The President announced his intention to nominate Ricardo H. Hinojosa to be Chair of the U.S. Sentencing Commission.

The President announced his intention to nominate Michael E. O'Neill for reappointment as a member of the U.S. Sentencing Commission.

February 24

In the morning, the President had an intelligence briefing. Later, he met with Secretary of State Colin L. Powell.

In the afternoon, the President had lunch with Vice President Dick Cheney. Later, in the Cabinet Room, he met with Republican congressional leaders to discuss legislative priorities.

Later in the afternoon, the President attended an African American History Month reception on the State Floor.

February 25

In the morning, in the Oval Office, the President had breakfast with congressional leaders. Later, he had an intelligence briefing.

Also in the morning, the President had a telephone conversation with President Hosni Mubarak of Egypt to discuss regional issues.

During the day, the President met with members of the Congressional Black Caucus to discuss the situation in Haiti.

The President announced his intention to nominate Theodore William Kassinger to be Deputy Secretary of Commerce.

The President announced his intention to nominate Michael Christian Polt to be Ambassador to Serbia and Montenegro.

The President announced his intention to nominate Neil McPhie to be Chairman of the Merit Systems Protection Board.

The President announced his intention to appoint Rosalyn Queen Alonso, Stephen J. Moses, and Paul S. Polo, Sr., as members of the Board of Trustees of the Christopher Columbus Fellowship Foundation.

February 26

In the morning, the President had an intelligence briefing. Later, he traveled to Louisville, KY, where, upon arrival, he greeted USA Freedom Corps volunteer Marina Partee.

In the afternoon, the President returned to Washington, DC.

The President announced his intention to appoint William Hogarth as a U.S. Commissioner to the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas.

February 27

In the morning, the President had an intelligence briefing. Later, he met with Secretary of Defense Donald H. Rumsfeld.

Later in the morning, the President had lunch with Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder of Germany, following their meeting in the Oval Office.

In the afternoon, the President and Mrs. Bush traveled to Camp David, MD.

The President announced his intention to nominate Ann R. Klee to be Assistant Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency.

The President announced his intention to appoint Benjamin S. Carson, Sr., Peter A. Lawler, and Diana J. Schaub as members of the President's Council on Bioethics.

Nominations Submitted to the Senate

The following list does not include promotions of members of the Uniformed Services, nominations to the Service Academies, or nominations of Foreign Service officers.

Submitted February 23

Paul V. Applegarth,
of Connecticut, to be Chief Executive Officer, Millennium Challenge Corporation (new position).

John Campbell,
of Virginia, a career member of the Senior Foreign Service, class of Minister-Counselor, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Federal Republic of Nigeria.

Ricardo H. Hinojosa,
of Texas, to be Chair of the U.S. Sentencing Commission, vice Diana E. Murphy, resigned.

Michael O'Neill,
of Maryland, to be a member of the U.S. Sentencing Commission for a term expiring October 31, 2009 (reappointment).

Withdrawn February 23

Jaymie Alan Durnan,
of New Hampshire, to be an Assistant Secretary of the Army, vice Mario P. Fiori, which was sent to the Senate on November 21, 2003.

Submitted February 26

John J. Danilovich,
of California, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Federative Republic of Brazil.

Theodore William Kassinger,
of Maryland, to be Deputy Secretary of Commerce, vice Samuel W. Bodman, resigned.

Edward R. McPherson,
of Texas, to be Under Secretary of Education, vice Eugene Hickok.

Neil McPhie,
of Virginia, to be Chairman of the Merit Systems Protection Board, vice Susanne T. Marshall.

Michael Christian Polt,
of Tennessee, a career member of the Senior Foreign Service, class of Minister-Counselor, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to Serbia and Montenegro.

Mark B. McClellan,
of the District of Columbia, to be Administrator of the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, vice Thomas Scully, resigned.

Withdrawn February 26

John Joseph Grossenbacher,
of Illinois, to be a member of the Nuclear Regulatory Commission for the remainder of the term expiring June 30, 2004, vice Richard A. Meserve, resigned, and for the term of 5 years expiring June 30, 2008 (reappointment), which were sent to the Senate on July 25, 2003.

Susanne T. Marshall,
of California, to be Chairman of the Merit Systems Protection Board, vice Beth Susan Slavet, which was sent to the Senate on January 26, 2004.

Checklist of White House Press Releases

The following list contains releases of the Office of the Press Secretary that are neither printed as items nor covered by entries in the Digest of Other White House Announcements.

Released February 21

Statement by the Press Secretary on the death of Spot

Released February 23

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Scott McClellan

Released February 24

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Scott McClellan

Statement by the Press Secretary announcing that the President signed S. 610

Released February 25

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Scott McClellan

Statement by the Press Secretary on the President's meeting with the Congressional Black Caucus

Released February 26

Transcript of a press gaggle by Deputy Press Secretary Claire Buchan

Statement by the Press Secretary on Libya's actions to disclose and dismantle its weapons of mass destruction programs

Statement by the Press Secretary on the earthquake in Morocco

Released February 27

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Scott McClellan

Acts Approved by the President

Approved February 24

S. 610 / Public Law 108–201
NASA Flexibility Act of 2004