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Weekly Compilation of

Presidential Documents

Monday, September 5, 2005
Volume 41—Number 35
Pages 1309–1347

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Editor's Note: The President was participating in a tour of Gulf Coast areas damaged by Hurricane Katrina on September 2, 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

Published every Monday by the Office of the Federal Register, National Archives and Records Administration, Washington, DC 20408, the *Weekly Compilation of Presidential Documents* contains statements, messages, and other Presidential materials released by the White House during the preceding week.

The *Weekly Compilation of Presidential Documents* is published pursuant to the authority contained in the Federal Register Act (49 Stat. 500, as amended; 44 U.S.C. Ch. 15), under regulations prescribed by the Administrative Committee of the Federal Register, approved by the President (37 FR 23607; 1 CFR Part 10).

Distribution is made only by the Superintendent of Documents, Government Printing Office, Washington, DC 20402. The *Weekly Compilation of Presidential Documents* will be furnished by mail to domestic subscribers for $80.00 per year ($137.00 for mailing first class) and to foreign subscribers for $93.75 per year, payable to the Superintendent of Documents, Government Printing Office, Washington, DC 20402. The charge for a single copy is $3.00 ($3.75 for foreign mailing).

The *Weekly Compilation of Presidential Documents* is also available on the Internet on the *GPO Access* service at http://www.gpoaccess.gov/wcomp/index.html.

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US GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE
SUPERINTENDENT OF DOCUMENTS
Washington DC 20402

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Week Ending Friday, September 2, 2005

The President's Radio Address

August 27, 2005

Good morning. In recent days, we have witnessed remarkable events in the broader Middle East. People are making the tough choices necessary for a future of security and hope that will make the region and the world more peaceful.

During the past 2 weeks, Prime Minister Sharon and the Israeli people took a courageous and painful step by removing Israeli settlements in Gaza and parts of the northern West Bank. I congratulate the Prime Minister for his bold leadership.

Now that Israel has withdrawn, the way forward is clear. The Palestinians must show the world that they will fight terrorism and govern in a peaceful way. We will continue to help the Palestinians to prepare for self government and to defeat the terrorists who attack Israel and oppose the establishment of a peaceful Palestinian state.

We remain fully committed to defending the security and well-being of our friend and ally Israel. We demand an end to terrorism and violence in every form because we know that progress depends on ending terror. And we will continue working for the day when the map of the Middle East shows two democratic states, Israel and Palestine, living side by side in peace and security.

As these hopeful events occur in the Holy Land, the people of Iraq are also making the tough choices and compromises necessary for a free and peaceful future. In January, 8½ million Iraqis defied the terrorists and went to the polls to vote. Iraq's main ethnic and religious groups made the courageous choice to join the political process. And together, they have worked toward a democratic constitution that respects the traditions of their country and guarantees the rights of all their citizens.

Like our own Nation's Founders over two centuries ago, the Iraqis are grappling with difficult issues, such as the role of the Federal Government. What is important is that Iraqis are now addressing these issues through debate and discussion, not at the barrel of a gun. The establishment of a democratic constitution in Iraq, just like the establishment of a constitution in Afghanistan last year, will be a landmark event in the history of the broader Middle East. And it will bring us closer to the day when the nation of Iraq can govern itself, sustain itself, and defend itself.

The terrorists are trying to stop the rise of democracy in Iraq because they know a free Iraq will deal a decisive blow to their strategy to dominate the Middle East. But the Iraqi people are determined to build a free future for their nation, and they are uniting against the terrorists.

We saw that unity earlier this month when followers of the terrorist Zarqawi tried to force Shiite Muslims to leave the Iraqi city of Ramadi. Sunni Muslims in that city came to the defense of their Shiite neighbors. As one Sunni leader put it, "We have had enough of Zarqawi's nonsense. We don't accept that a non-Iraqi should try to enforce his control over Iraqis." By choosing to stand with their fellow Iraqis, these Sunnis rejected the terrorists' attempt to divide their nation and incite sectarian violence.

Iraqis are working together to build a free nation that contributes to peace and stability in the region, and we will help them succeed. American and Iraqi forces are on the hunt, side by side to defeat the terrorists. As we hunt down our common enemies, we will continue to train more Iraqi security forces.

Our strategy is straightforward: As Iraqis stand up, Americans will stand down. And when Iraqi forces can defend their freedom by taking more and more of the fight to the enemy, our troops will come home with the honor they have earned.

Our efforts in Iraq and the broader Middle East will require more time, more sacrifice,

and continued resolve. Yet people across the Middle East are choosing a future of freedom and prosperity and hope. And as they take these brave steps, Americans will continue to stand with them because we know that free and democratic nations are peaceful nations. By advancing the cause of liberty in the Middle East, we will bring hope to millions and security to our own citizens. And we will lay the foundation of peace for our children and grandchildren.

Thank you for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 8:20 a.m. on August 26 at the Bush Ranch in Crawford, TX, for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on August 27. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on August 26 but was embargoed for release until the broadcast. In his address, the President referred to Prime Minister Ariel Sharon of Israel; 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 on Hurricane Katrina and the Iraqi Constitution in Crawford, Texas

August 28, 2005

This morning I spoke with FEMA Under Secretary Mike Brown and emergency management teams, not only at the Federal level but at the State level about the—Hurricane Katrina. I've also spoken to Governor Blanco of Louisiana, Governor Barbour of Mississippi, Governor Bush of Florida, and Governor Riley of Alabama. I want to thank all the folks at the Federal level and the State level and the local level who have taken this storm seriously. I appreciate the efforts of the Governors to prepare their citizenry for this upcoming storm.

Yesterday I signed a disaster declaration for the State of Louisiana, and this morning I signed a disaster declaration for the State of Mississippi. These declarations will allow Federal agencies to coordinate all disaster relief efforts with State and local officials. We will do everything in our power to help the people in the communities affected by this storm.

Hurricane Katrina is now designated a category 5 hurricane. We cannot stress enough the danger this hurricane poses to Gulf Coast communities. I urge all citizens to put their own safety and the safety of their families first by moving to safe ground. Please listen carefully to instructions provided by State and local officials.

On another matter, today Iraqi political leaders completed the process for drafting a permanent constitution. Their example is an inspiration to all who share the universal values of freedom, democracy, and the rule of law. The negotiators and drafters of this document braved the intimidation of terrorists, and they mourn the cowardly assassination of friends and colleagues involved in the process of drafting the constitution.

Their efforts follow the bravery of the Iraqis who voted by the millions to elect a Transitional Government in January. The example of those voters remains a humbling testament to the power of free people to shape and define their own destiny. We honor their courage and sacrifice, and we are determined to see the Iraqis fully secure their democratic gains.

The Iraqi people have once again demonstrated to the world that they are up to the historic challenges before them. The document they have produced contains far-reaching protections for fundamental human freedoms, including religion, assembly, conscience, and expression. It vests sovereignty in the people, to be expressed by secret ballot and regular elections. It declares that all Iraqis are equal before the law without regard to gender, ethnicity, and religion. This is a document of which the Iraqis and the rest of the world can be proud.

The political process now advances to another important stage for a new and free Iraq. In coming months, Iraqis will discuss and debate the draft constitution. On October the 15th, they will vote in a national referendum to decide whether to ratify the constitution and set the foundation for a permanent Iraqi Government. If the referendum succeeds, Iraqis will elect a new Government, to serve under the new constitution, on December the 15th, and that Government will take office before the end of the year.

This course is going to be difficult largely because the terrorists have chosen to wage war against a future of freedom. They are waging war against peace in Iraq. As democracy in Iraq takes root, the enemies of freedom, the terrorists, will become more desperate, more despicable, and more vicious.

Just last week, the terrorists called for the death of anyone, including women and the elderly, who supports the democratic process in Iraq. They have deliberately targeted children receiving candy from soldiers. They have targeted election workers registering Iraqis to vote. They have targeted hospital workers who are caring for the wounded. We can expect such atrocities to increase in the coming months because the enemy knows that its greatest defeat lies in the expression of free people and freely enacted laws and at the ballot box.

We will stand with the Iraqi people. It's in our interest to stand with the Iraqi people. It's in our interest to lay the foundation of peace. We'll help them confront this barbarism, and we will triumph over the terrorists' dark ideology of hatred and fear.

There have been disagreements amongst the Iraqis about this particular constitution. Of course there's disagreements. We're watching a political process unfold, a process that has encouraged debate and compromise, a constitution that was written in a society in which people recognize that—that there had to be give-and-take.

I want our folks to remember, our own Constitution was not unanimously received. Some delegates at the Philadelphia Convention in 1787 refused to sign it, and the draft was vigorously debated in every State, and the outcome was not assured until all the votes were counted.

We recognize that there's a split amongst the Sunnis, for example, in Iraq. And I suspect that when you get down to it, you'll find a Shi'a who disagrees with the constitution and Shi'as who support the constitution and perhaps some Kurds who are concerned about the constitution. In other words, we're watching a political process unfold. Some Sunnis have expressed reservations about various provisions of the constitution, and that's their right as free individuals living in a free society. There are strong beliefs among other Sunnis that this constitution is good for all Iraqis and that it adequately reflects compromises suitable to all groups.

It's important that all Iraqis now actively engage in the constitutional process by debating the merits of this important document and making an informed decision on October the 15th.

On behalf of the American people, I congratulate the people of Iraq on completing the next step in their transition from dictatorship to democracy. And I want to remind the American people, as a democracy unfolds in Iraq, not only will it help make America more secure but it will affect the broader Middle East. Democracies don't war with their neighbors. Democracies don't become safe haven for terrorists who want to destroy innocent life. We have hard work ahead of us, but we're on the—we're making good progress toward making sure this world of ours is more peaceful for generations to come.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:31 a.m. at the Bush Ranch. In his remarks, he referred to Gov. Kathleen Babineaux Blanco of Louisiana; Gov. Haley Barbour of Mississippi; Gov. Jeb Bush of Florida; and Gov. Bob Riley of Alabama.

Remarks in a Discussion on Medicare in El Mirage, Arizona

August 29, 2005

The President. Thank you all. Please be seated. Thanks for coming. As you can see, it's not going to be just me doing the talking today. We've got some of your fellow citizens here to discuss how we can make sure our senior citizens understand there's a fantastic opportunity available for them in the improved Medicare piece of legislation I signed.

Before we start talking about Medicare, I do want to thank the good folks here at this center, those who live here, those who are helping the folks who live here, for inviting us. It's not easy to have the Presidential entourage come. [*Laughter*] I understand that. But at least my entourage was spiced up by the First Lady's traveling with me today. I appreciate you coming.

Laura and I are proud to be here. We're proud to be with Senator Jon Kyl, who is a fantastic United States Senator. I appreciate you, Senator. We appreciate working with you, and we appreciate getting to know you. He brings Arizona values to Washington, DC. He's a good, down-to-earth fellow who cares a lot about the people here.

And speaking about somebody who does a fine job representing this district, we're honored to be here with Trent Franks—Congressman, thank you—and his wife, Josie. One thing about Trent Franks, you don't have to worry about him telling the truth. He's a good, decent, honorable citizen, and I'm proud to call him friend. I want to thank you for coming, Congressman.

I want to thank the secretary of state, Jan Brewer. Madam Secretary, I appreciate you being here. And the state treasurer, David Petersen—David, thanks for coming. There he is. I don't know if it helps or hurts, but he's from Temple, Texas. [*Laughter*] If it hurts, just forget it. [*Laughter*] That's right around the corner from Crawford.

I'm really honored that the senate president is with us, Ken Bennett. I'm honored you're here. And the speaker is with us. Thank you all for coming. I appreciate you coming. Good to see you again, Ken. Speaker, appreciate you being here.

I want to thank the mayor, Fred Waterman. Mr. Mayor, thanks for coming. There he is. Phil Gordon—Mayor, are you here? Thanks, Mayor, good to see you, sir. Proud you're here. Honored you took time to come. And I want to thank Mayor Elaine Scruggs of Glendale, Arizona. Appreciate your service.

When Laura and I landed, we visited with Ruben and Rita Carroll. They work for the Retired and Senior Volunteer Program, the RSVP program. The reason I bring them up is that the great strength of this country lies in the hearts and souls of our citizens. We got millions of people across our country who volunteer to make somebody else's life better. And it doesn't matter how old you are or how young you are, there's plenty of opportunity in America to volunteer. And here are two citizens who are setting the way and setting a great example. Thanks for coming—appreciate you setting such a good example for others. Raise your hands so they can see you. There you go.

I know my fellow citizens here in Arizona and across the country are saying our prayers for those affected by the—Hurricane Katrina. Our Gulf Coast is getting hit and hit hard. I want the folks there on the Gulf Coast to know that the Federal Government is prepared to help you when the storm passes. I want to thank the Governors of the affected regions for mobilizing assets prior to the arrival of the storm to help citizens avoid this devastating storm.

I urge the citizens there in the region to continue to listen to the local authorities. Don't abandon your shelters until you're given clearance by the local authorities. Take precautions, because this is a dangerous storm. When the storm passes, the Federal Government has got assets and resources that we'll be deploying to help you. In the meantime, America will pray—pray for the health and safety of all our citizens.

I also want to talk about immigration here in this State. I understand the issue well. I was the Governor of a border State. I was the Governor of the State of Texas. I know what it means to have a long border with Mexico. And I understand the solemn obligation of the State government and the Federal Government to enforce our border. I did so when I was Governor, and I'll work with your Governor and Governors along the border to do so as the President of the United States. We have an obligation to enforce the borders.

I understand it's putting a strain on your resources. We know that. I don't know if you know this or not, but hundreds of thousands of people have been detained trying to illegally cross into Arizona. In other words, what I'm telling you is, there's a lot of people working hard to get the job done, but there is more we can do.

I spoke to Mike Chertoff today; he's the head of the Department of Homeland Security. I knew people would want me to discuss this issue, so we got us an airplane on—a telephone on Air Force One, so I called him. I said, "Are you working with the Governor?" He said, "You bet we are." That's the most effective way to do things, is to work with the State and local authorities. There are

more resources that will be available. We'll have more folks on the border. There will be more detention space to make sure that those who are stopped trying to illegally enter our country are able to be detained.

It's important for the people of this State to understand, your voices are being heard in Washington, DC. And this Senator and this Congressman are working closely with the administration to make sure we got the resources necessary to do our responsibility, which is enforce this border. And we'll do so—and we'll do so.

I know you're concerned about gasoline prices, and so am I. We finally got us an energy bill, and I want to thank the Members here for helping. You just got to understand that the situation we got ourselves into, dependency on foreign sources of oil, took awhile to get there, and it's going to take awhile to become less dependent. But this energy bill means we've now got a strategy which will encourage diversification away from foreign sources of oil.

And we need to do a lot of things. We need to encourage the development of nuclear power. We need to continue to develop clean coal technology so we can use that abundant resource. We need to have more terminals so we can bring liquified natural gas from around the world into the United States of America.

We will continue to use the crops in the ground to help fuel our automobiles, ethanol and biodiesel. It's going to take awhile to get diversified away from foreign oil, but thanks to Members of Congress, we got the bill passed after 4 years of debate, and now this country is beginning the diversification process. There's no way—I wish I could just snap my fingers and lower the price of gasoline for you. The markets don't work that way. I'd be snapping if I could do it. [*Laughter*] But we've got a strategy and a plan to help you.

I also want to talk about some hopeful events overseas. First of all, I hope you've watched what has happened in the Holy Land. Prime Minister Sharon made a courageous decision to remove settlements out of Gaza. He said to the world, "I'm going to give the Palestinians a chance to develop a democracy." And the first step toward that democracy is to give—is to remove the settlements out of Gaza. It took political courage to make that decision, and now it's going to take political courage by the Palestinians and Prime Minister Abbas to step up, reject violence, reject terrorism, and build a democracy. And the United States of America stands ready to help.

And there's hopeful developments in Iraq. I know you see violence on your TV screens, and it breaks my heart to see the death of innocent life there. But that's the only thing the terrorists have got going for them. They've got the capacity to shake our conscience because, unlike their ideology, we value every human life. Every person is precious.

I am very optimistic about Iraq because, first of all, I believe deep in everybody's soul is the desire to be free. Freedom is not our country's gift to the world. Freedom is an Almighty God's gift to each person in this world.

My hopes for free societies, of course, were bolstered when 8½ million Iraqis went to the polls last January. I know it seems like a long way away, but it wasn't all that long ago when you think about it. They voted. And recently, instead of using guns to decide the fate of the future, Iraqis from all aspects of their society came together and wrote a constitution. This constitution is one that honors women's rights and freedom of religion. Not everybody agreed with it, but now the Iraqi people get to decide. They get to debate. They get to make the decision this fall as to whether or not that constitution will be the constitution that governs their society. And that frightens the terrorists. It scares—they cannot stand the thought of a free society emerging in the broader Middle East. The free society is the exact opposite of their vision of the world. If you want to think about the vision of these terrorists and killers, just think about what life was like for young girls, for example, under the Taliban in Afghanistan. There is no dissent. There's no right. There is no freedom.

We are laying the foundation for peace. It's hard work. But I want to assure you that for your—sake of your grandchildren and your grandchildren's children, that this policy is laying that foundation for peace, because

we understand free societies are peaceful societies. We will defeat the terrorists in the short run by staying on the offense. We will defeat them in the long run by spreading freedom around the world.

Not only did I sign an energy bill, I signed a highway bill. That's going to be good for you if you've got a car. [*Laughter*] I also will continue to work on Social Security. I just want to make sure the seniors here understand one thing: Nothing is going to change for you. I hope you don't listen to all the politics coming out of Washington, DC, but you will get your check. You need to worry about whether or not your grandchildren will get their checks.

This system cannot sustain itself the way it is now set up. We got young kids working to pay payroll taxes into the system that's going to be broke in 2040. And that's not fair, and it's not right. My job is to confront problems, not pass them on to future Presidents. And I'm going to continue to confront that Social Security problem.

And we confronted a problem in Medicare. I remember the debate in Washington. They said, "Well, you know, this is an entitlement." Well, no, the entitlement has already been granted. This Federal Government of ours decided to provide health care for our seniors. And therefore, my attitude was, if we're going to provide health care for our seniors, let's provide the best health care available for our seniors.

And one of the things that the current system, prior to our reform, didn't do, it didn't provide prescription drugs. Now, think about that kind of system that was so antiquated and outdated that we would pay money for an ulcer but not money for the prescription drug that would prevent the ulcer from occurring in the first place. That didn't make any sense. We'd provide money for the heart surgery but not one dime of prescription drug coverage for medicines that would prevent the heart surgery from being needed in the first place. I always felt that wasn't a very smart use of taxpayers' money. We'd pay the $28,000 for the ulcer but not the $500 for the medicine.

Secondly, we didn't do any preventative screenings in Medicare. A simple proposition says that if we're going to help have somebody have a healthy life, we ought to have a screening to determine what's wrong so we can solve the problem early, before it's too late.

Thirdly, we felt like seniors ought to have choice. The Government ought to trust people. The Government, as you know, in Medicare, made most of the decisions. This new bill I signed says, "If you're a senior and you like the way things are today, you're in good shape; don't change." But by the way, there's a lot of different options for you. And we're here to talk about what that means to our seniors.

And finally, a part of the Medicare bill that's very important for younger workers and small business is what's called health savings accounts. It's a really interesting option that, if you're running a small business, I urge you to look at to make sure that you've got quality health care available for your employees.

This is a good bill. It started—the bill started kicking in last year when—when we had what's called a "Welcome to Medicare" physical. If you're—if you've just recently signed up for Medicare, you know what I'm talking about. There is a free physical available for everybody who's signing up for Medicare. That's part of the preventative screening. And by the way, prior to that, we had drug discount cards for pharmacies. We saved a lot of seniors a lot of money. About 6 million seniors took advantage of the card.

What we're talking about today is new programs and plans with prescription drugs becoming available for our seniors. This is as much an education exercise as anything else, because I fully understand and our Government fully understands, many seniors don't want to change. They're not interested in change. And therefore, what I'm telling you is, is that, at least listen to what's available. You don't have to change if you don't want to, but at least be open-minded enough to listen. And our panelists today are going to represent different constituencies that will help seniors understand what's available.

By the way, starting October 1st—we have a timetable, we got a calendar. And I've got my man, McClellan, with us. He's a doctor and a Ph.D. See, every Government has got to have a Ph.D., but you notice who—the

Ph.D. is not the President. [*Laughter*] That's the way—kind of way it works. But he's going to help—his job is to help make sure seniors understand what's available. Starting October 1st, 2005, Medicare beneficiaries start receiving information about available drug plans. So this is a pre-selling phase. We're traveling the country. I'm doing events like these; Mark is doing a lot of events like these—the Secretary of Health and Human Services. We're laying the groundwork. We want people to be prepared for what is available.

Secondly, on November 15th, enrollment starts. In other words, you can start signing up. If you're unhappy with the current Medicare plan, here's an opportunity to sign up for a new plan.

Thirdly, January 1st, 2006, prescription drug coverage begins for seniors on Medicare. Think about that. For years, there has been no prescription drug coverage. Starting January 1st of 2006, prescription drug coverage is available, and you have up to May 15th to sign up. So we're—there's going to be ample time for people to take a look to determine whether or not you want to change from your current plan.

There's 780,000 folks on Medicare here in Arizona, and one of the reasons I have come is, hopefully, to get a message out to as many of the 780,000 that I can. And by the way, we're leaving behind a lot of folks who are going to help get out the message here in Arizona as well. If you got any questions, there's an easy way to figure out what I'm talking about here. It's called 1–800–MEDICARE. Pick up the phone; there will be somebody there to answer your question. Isn't that right, Mark? Yes. [*Laughter*] They don't want one of these "check's in the mail" deal, you know—or medicare.gov.

The reason I'm telling you this—and I'm going to say it again before I'm through talking—is that it's really important, for example, for sons and daughters to look into what's available for their mothers and dads, and one way to do it is to get on 1–800–MEDICARE or medicare.gov.

Seniors with no drug coverage and average drug dispenses will see their drug costs cut in half—by one-half. Think about that. This plan will cut your drug bill by half. You need to look at it. You need to look at what's available. And for the first time ever, Medicare has got catastrophic coverage for our seniors. In other words, it says that after you've spent $3,600 a year, the Government will pick up 95 percent of your prescription drug costs. And that's important. That's called peace of mind. It's peace of mind for you. It's peace of mind for your family. One of the interesting parts of this Medicare bill is the catastrophic coverage, and that's important, I thought, for quality of life—and so did Members of the Senate and Members of the House.

Competition works, by the way. You've got one provider, the Federal Government; it doesn't give consumers a lot of choice. But when you provide consumers choice, it's amazing what can happen. People start bidding for your service, so to speak. They want to attract your business. And it's going to work in Medicare too. Did you realize that there's at least one prescription drug plan with premiums below $20 a month in every State now? It's a pretty good deal. And here in Arizona, you've got two plans that cost $20 a month or less and six plans at 20 to 25 dollars a month. In other words, you've got people bidding for your services. That's the whole purpose of the bill, is to say the consumer matters, and our seniors matter a lot. And so you've got a lot of choices.

You can pick any Medicare drug plan that meets your needs, and there will be—as I mentioned, here in Arizona, there's quite a few to choose from. You can keep Medicare as it is. Do you realize about 200,000 citizens here in Arizona use Medicare Advantage Plans, and they're really important plans. It's all part of making sure there is a menu of choice available for our seniors.

I want to talk about low-income seniors right quick. And by the way, if you're getting your coverage from your labor union or your business, this bill will help make sure that your labor union and your business continues to provide health care for you.

I want to talk about low-income seniors, and this is very important for people to understand; that's why it's important for people to go out and explain to—what's available. One-third of our seniors, the lower-income seniors, will be eligible for drug benefits that include little or no premium. In other words,

the premium I was talking about was for people who are more likely able to afford a premium. If you're a poor senior here in Arizona, you will have—end up with little or no premium, low deductibles, and no gaps in coverage. It's a good deal, is what I'm telling you. Let me put it bottom line: You need to look at this plan. On average, Medicare will pay over 95 percent of your costs for prescription drugs.

Now, here's what you have to do—now, this may frighten some seniors—you got to fill out a form. It would frighten me. The good news is, it's a simple application, and it's four pages long. If you believe that—well, it could be 40. Big print. If you believe that you're eligible, you need to fill out the form. If you're a mother—I mean, if you're a son or a daughter, you need to get your mom or your dad to fill out the form, I'm telling you.

And that's why we're traveling the country. This is a good deal for our seniors. We have changed Medicare. We have done our duty in Washington, DC. We've upgraded an important program and made it better. And part of the challenge, it's one thing to pass the law—that was challenging enough—but part of the challenge now is to make sure the Federal Government, in concert with State and local governments as well as faith-based groups, grassroots groups, community-based groups, lobbying groups, whatever, all kinds of groups, gets the word out.

I want to thank you all for listening, and expect you as good citizens to help get the word out.

Now, the man in charge, I mentioned, is McClellan, Dr. Mark McClellan. Told you he had a Ph.D., didn't I? He also has an M.D. He has got a big responsibility. He is the Administrator of the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services. Is that right?

Dr. Mark B. McClellan. That's exactly right.

The President. He's a Texan, which means he can get the job done and will get the job done.

Explain how you're going to get the job done.

Dr. McClellan. Well, I'm getting a lot of help, and besides that, we've got a chance now, with the new law that was just enacted, to turn Medicare into a program, from one that just pays the bill when people get sick to one that really helps keep them healthy, with drug coverage, with the preventive benefits that you mentioned, Mr. President.

The thing is, speaking now from that medical background that you mentioned, you can do a lot more to keep a patient healthy if they're your partners in the effort, if they understand what they can do, if they take steps in their own life to get better care, to take care of themselves to live a longer and better life. And that's really what the new Medicare program is all about.

When I say we're getting a lot of help, I mean we're turning Medicare into a program that's really about partnership: partnerships with our beneficiaries to make sure their benefits stay up to date; partnerships with health professionals and advocates and experts around the country to make sure that people can get the assistance they need to keep their coverage up to date; partnerships to make people healthier and save money in the process.

The President. To follow up on this low-income deal for seniors, make sure that—I need a second voice up here—people are saying, "Of course, he's telling us that," you know. I'm telling you, it's a good deal.

Dr. McClellan. It is.

The President. The doc's about to tell you.

Dr. McClellan. It is. I've had a chance to talk to a lot of people around the country. I think some of the people up here on the stage with us have had a chance to as well. This coverage for people with limited income will pay for, in most cases, all of the cost of the premium. So you have a zero premium, no deductible, no gaps in your coverage, and you'll only pay a few dollars for each prescription, at most 3 or 5 dollars and, in a lot of cases, less than that.

And people who may not think of themselves as low-income are actually eligible for this extra help. Basically, if you're struggling with paying for your drugs today because you're living on a fixed income, you've got to worry about paying for the drugs, paying for your rent, paying for your food; you should look into this program. People with

incomes in—couples—up to—close to $20,000 are eligible.

And so about one in three seniors, Mr. President, as you said, one in three people with disabilities are eligible for this extra help.

The President. And what happens if somebody is interested and calls the 1–800–MEDICARE line?

Dr. McClellan. Well, we can give them help in filling out that form. We're working closely with the Social Security Administration as well. They sent out letters to everyone who they think may be eligible, based on their Social Security earnings. We're starting to get those applications back in. And as you said, "When in doubt, fill out the application." If you can't fill out all the questions—and it does run four pages, but it is big type, and it's only 16 questions altogether, most people only have to answer 12—if there's one you get to that you can't answer, that's okay. Go ahead and send in the part that you can complete, and Social Security will call you back and help you through the other questions.

The President. Great, thanks. Mark's doing a good job. Believe it or not, the Government is actually functioning in an efficient manner on this issue. And I appreciate it. It really is. He's the right man for this job.

Nancy Bryan. What do you do, Nancy?

Nancy Bryan. How are you doing today?

The President. Good, pretty good. [*Laughter*] If you like the heat, I'm doing great. [*Laughter*] It's not exactly cool in Crawford, either. [*Laughter*]

Ms. Bryan. This is a dry heat.

The President. Yes, that's right. [*Laughter*] So what do you do?

Ms. Bryan. I'm a pharmacist here in the valley, and I actually work for Walmart and Sam's Club.

The President. Good.

Ms. Bryan. What I do is I travel all over the valley filling in when people need vacation time or if they have a day off. And it has been great because it gives me a chance to meet seniors from all over the valley.

The President. Right.

Ms. Bryan. In fact, I've been spending a little time up here in Surprise, lately.

The President. That's good. And are you aware of the Medicare—have you been following what we've been talking about?

Ms. Bryan. I definitely have. Walmart actually has put together a program for all of their pharmacies, and they've actually been helping to train us so that we know what to do when the patients do come into us. We have information that we can hand out to them, that we can get them to the people that can really help them the most.

The President. Part of making sure the seniors know what's available is to call on a lot of folks. The pharmacists around the country have been really doing a great service for our seniors. In other words, if—point-of-sale marketing works. And so you have a senior coming to a counter, you're available, as are your fellow men and women who work in the pharmacies, to explain, "Here's what's available. Take a look at the Medicare plan." Isn't that what you're doing?

Ms. Bryan. Exactly.

The President. Yes. It's a good deal. [*Laughter*] And there's a lot of folks making sure people understand. We fully understand that some people are afraid to change. We know that. And you don't have to. But I do want to thank the pharmacists, and I want to thank Nancy. I want to thank Walmart. That's called corporate responsibility, is to help people understand what's available.

And so, what are you finding? Are you finding people are nervous about it, interested about it?

Ms. Bryan. I think they're just wanting to know more information. They're a little bit confused. They're a little bit nervous.

The President. Right.

Ms. Bryan. And I think that they're just trying to figure out if it really works for them. Is this the program that's going to really help them?

The President. And there have been seminars at Walmart to make sure the pharmacists——

Ms. Bryan. Well, we actually have a continuing education system for all the pharmacists.

The President. Really? That's great. That's important, and so there will be pharmacists all around Arizona who will have the

proper information to explain to Arizona seniors the sign-up dates, what's available, when you can enroll, when you can start getting your prescription drugs. And that's important for people to know.

One of the things—one of the reasons I'm traveling, one of the reasons Mark is traveling, is to thank people for doing their civic duty. So I'm going to start, thanking you.

Ms. Bryan. Well, thank you.

The President. I appreciate you. And another person I'm going to thank—good job——

Ms. Bryan. Thank you.

The President. ——Lieutenant Colonel Don Mowery. Is that right?

Lt. Col. Don R. Mowery. Mr. President.

The President. Yes, thanks for coming.

Lt. Col. Mowery. Thank you.

The President. Of the Salvation Army.

Lt. Col. Mowery. Thank you.

The President. Mowery. The reason I asked Don to come is that throughout this great State and throughout our country is this wonderful fabric of faith-based organizations, all of which exist to serve their fellow—fellow mankind. And the Salvation Army does a great job of doing that by the way.

Lt. Col. Mowery. Thank you. Thank you very much.

The President. Have you ever heard of the Medicare reform plan?

Lt. Col. Mowery. I have, sir.

The President. Other than this meeting?

Lt. Col. Mowery. I have.

The President. Good. How did you learn about it?

[*At this point, Lt. Col. Don R. Mowery, commander, Southwest Division, Salvation Army, made brief remarks.*]

The President. Well, this is an important piece—this is good. First of all, one of the reasons, again, I want to repeat, you've got a lot of churches and temples and faith-based organizations and community groups to help. If you go to a church, do your duty and find out what we're talking about and help the seniors at your church at least understand what's available. That's what the Army is doing. They've got all kinds of programs at the Salvation Army, and they've taken it upon themselves to say, as a part of their outreach to the senior community here in Arizona, "I'm going to learn what this is all about." It is—I appreciate you doing this.

Lt. Col. Mowery. Thank you, Mr. President.

The President. And thanks for setting such a good example.

Lt. Col. Mowery. Thank you.

The President. Now we've got Noreen Goodell. Noreen, thank you for being here.

Noreen Goodell. Well, thank you, Mr. President.

The President. What do you do?

Ms. Goodell. I'm becoming very nervous on stage. [*Laughter*]

The President. You don't look it, so don't let them know. [*Laughter*]

Ms. Goodell. I thought that was, "Don't let them see you sweat."

The President. That's it. [*Laughter*]

Ms. Goodell. I have the privilege and honor of being a registered nurse, and I work for Sun Health Hospice.

The President. Good. Thank you.

Ms. Goodell. Thank you. And I am also the caregiver for my parents, my mother and father, and also my mother-in-law.

The President. Yes. This is an important—everybody is important up here—Noreen represents a constituency group that I'm going to keep calling upon, daughters and sons and daughter-in-laws and sons. We have an obligation, it seems like to me, and you're fulfilling that obligation.

Ms. Goodell. I am, and I'm blessed for it.

The President. There you go. So you heard about the Medicare deal.

Ms. Goodell. I have.

The President. And? How did you hear about it?

Ms. Goodell. Well, being a hospice nurse I deal with a lot of the geriatric population in Sun City and Sun City West, and sometimes they have questions about Medicare benefits, which we try our best to answer. So I thought that it was important that I would try to look into what benefits are available for them and also my parents as well, to make sure that I can provide the best care possible and be their advocate.

The President. Right. And is the schedule clear, the October 15th—the applications go

out, the sign-up dates, the—when it begins, is that——

Ms. Goodell. If it wasn't, it will be now. [*Laughter*]

The President. In other words—[*laughter*]—did you try 1–800–MEDICARE? [*Laughter*]

[*Ms. Goodell made further remarks.*]

The President. Listen, Noreen is here; she's a nurse. But if you've got a—but she's also a devoted child. Baby boomers—are you one?

Ms. Goodell. Sandwich generation.

The President. Sandwich generation, all right. I'm a baby boomer. [*Laughter*] All of us have a duty to find out what's available for our parents. We have an obligation as somebody who received the benefit of the love from a parent to do something to make sure our parents have got all options available to them. If you're worried about change, you do not have to change when it comes to Medicare. But if you're someone, for example, who's having to struggle between food and medicine, those days are over with. This Medicare bill relieves you of that burden and that anxiety.

And sons and daughters have got to understand that. And you need to find out what I'm talking about, for the sake of your parents. If your mother or father says, "I don't want to change," you don't have to change. But as a son or a daughter or as a faith-based initiative or as a nurse or as a pharmacist, you have a duty, as far as I'm concerned, to investigate what's available and to lay that out for people to see. And that's what we're here talking about.

And somebody who's going to benefit from this is Margaret Cantrell. That's you. Speak into that microphone, will you?

Margaret Cantrell. True, very true.

The President. She told me she has the same hairdo as my mother. [*Laughter*]

Ms. Cantrell. The same color. It's the same color.

The President. Yes, 3 more years as President and I'll have the same color you got.

Ms. Cantrell. Well, I'll be 82 years old.

The President. When?

Ms. Cantrell. This coming Monday.

The President. Oh, yeah, well, a little birthday celebration for you. You're looking pretty darn good.

Ms. Cantrell. Well, thank you.

The President. How you feeling?

Ms. Cantrell. Fair.

The President. Fair. [*Laughter*]

Ms. Cantrell. And I'm formerly from Salem, Illinois, which is Lisa James' hometown too.

The President. Lisa James, very good, yes. Nobody knows who she is except for me and Laura. All right, there's a couple others. [*Laughter*]

Ms. Cantrell. And I was a nanny for the James gang for quite awhile.

The President. No wonder you got gray hair. [*Laughter*]

Ms. Cantrell. And I do understand about the new program. I received something from Social Security about 2 weeks ago. I immediately filled it out and sent it back in.

The President. Good move. How about that. By the way, before we get to Medicare, this good lady lives on her Social Security check.

Ms. Cantrell. I certainly do.

The President. And she told me, she said she doesn't want anybody taking it away from her.

Ms. Cantrell. That's true.

The President. Isn't that right? It's not going to happen.

Ms. Cantrell. Oh, good.

The President. That's what you've got to know. The Social Security debate is one that causes people concern because they hear, "They're debating Social Security. They may change it, and I'm not going to get my check." If you're born prior to 1950, you have nothing to worry about.

Ms. Cantrell. I was. [*Laughter*]

The President. Who's writing your lines for you? [*Laughter*]

Ms. Cantrell. I have my daughter—I have just one daughter, Vicki Kaylor, and my son-in-law, Gene Kaylor, and two grandsons, Steve and David. And Vicki and David are with me today.

The President. Fantastic. And so how did you learn about the Medicare plan?

Ms. Cantrell. Well, I received it from Social Security.

The President. Oh, that's right. You already said that.

Ms. Cantrell. I did. [*Laughter*] And I'm on——

The President. Laura said, "I always said, pay attention." [*Laughter*]

Ms. Cantrell. I'm on a first-name basis with my pharmacist, and he's very nice. And he sent me this little brochure so I'd know more about it.

The President. Good. Have you started studying the different plans available yet?

Ms. Cantrell. No, I haven't gotten it yet.

The President. Okay, well, that will be coming your way. And there will be a different—variety of options, and I'm confident that Vicki will help you—you don't need help.

Ms. Cantrell. I filled it. She didn't even see it. I filled it out and sent it back in. [*Laughter*]

The President. Good. Not everybody is just going to fill it out that way. That's what people have got to understand, that people are going to need a little help.

Ms. Cantrell. But it was easy to do.

The President. There you go.

Ms. Cantrell. Really.

The President. She wasn't even prompted. That's awesome.

Ms. Cantrell. Nothing to it.

The President. Did you get the four-page form?

Ms. Cantrell. I did.

The President. Four pages.

Ms. Cantrell. Four pages.

The President. Sixteen questions.

Ms. Cantrell. I didn't count the questions, but——

The President. Big print.

Ms. Cantrell. Right.

The President. Good. That's good. [*Laughter*] Congratulations, you finally got a form to her. [*Laughter*] If in doubt, fill it out. [*Laughter*]

Ms. Cantrell. Right.

The President. Isn't that it?

Ms. Cantrell. That's it.

The President. See, it's really important for those of us in public service to continue to do our duty to folks like Margaret, one, to make sure the Social Security system is available, and it will be. It's just—just your great grandkids need to worry about it. I'm not kidding you.

Ms. Cantrell. I don't have any.

The President. Well—[*laughter*]—you might.

Ms. Cantrell. I might.

The President. Well, somebody else's great grandkids need to worry about it.

Ms. Cantrell. Right.

The President. Shhh. [*Laughter*] You're younger, you better worry about Social Security. If you're an older citizen, you don't have to worry about getting good health care through Medicare anymore. That's what we're here to talk about.

Margaret has shown—says to me that, "Pay attention." That's what she did. They got the form. Do people usually just throw away the paperwork that comes with Social Security? Now, I know you don't—not the check, but I'm talking about the paperwork. [*Laughter*]

Ms. Cantrell. No. No, I don't. I read it.

The President. Okay, good. I hope you don't either, out there. I hope people take a look at that form and pay attention to it because it has got valuable information for you. It means that the quality of your life will improve if you're struggling with prescription drug coverage. It means that this Federal Government has finally, after years, modernized Medicare. And if you want to, you can be in charge. You're in charge of the decisionmaking process. In other words, there's options for you. It's your choice to make. If you don't want to do anything, if you don't want to change at all, you don't have to. But there are a lot more choices available for you. And if you're a low-income senior, you got a fantastic opportunity to get prescription drug benefits.

We don't want you choosing between your utility bills and your food bills and prescription drugs. We want your quality of life to be great, as great as possible. And this Medicare bill will help there.

I want to thank our panelists for being here. Thank you for what you're doing. Thank you for your compassion. Thank you all for coming. May the good Lord continue to bless our great Nation. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:06 a.m. at the Pueblo El Mirage RV Resort and Country Club. In his remarks, he referred to Josephine Franks, wife of Representative Trent Franks; James P. Weiers, speaker, Arizona State House of Representatives; Mayor Fred Waterman of El Mirage, AZ; Mayor Phil Gordon of Phoenix, AZ; Prime Minister Ariel Sharon of Israel; President Mahmoud Abbas (Abu Mazen) of the Palestinian Authority; and Lisa James, Arizona State executive director, Bush-Cheney '04 campaign.

Remarks in a Discussion on Medicare in Rancho Cucamonga, California

August 29, 2005

The President. Thank you, David. Thank you very much. Thank you. Be seated, please. Thank you all for coming. Please be seated. Thank you. So David said we went to this school together; it was called a charm school. [*Laughter*] I never won my seat for Congress. He did. Obviously, it took on him and not on me. [*Laughter*] But I want to thank him for his introduction. I want to thank him for his leadership. David Dreier cares a lot about a lot of issues. One of the issues that he's been talking to me a lot about is to make sure the Federal Government does its job in enforcing our borders to keep illegal folks out of our country.

And I want to assure you—I don't know if you remember this, but I had a job prior to President, I was the Governor of a border State. And I understand the challenges of enforcing our border. I understand the Federal Government has a role, and State government has a role, and local government has a role. And my pledge to the people of California is that the Federal Government will work closely with the State government and local government to provide assets, manpower, detention space, to do our duty, and that is to make sure this border of ours is secure.

And so I want to thank you on your leadership on that issue, David, and I thank you for working with us on that important issue.

I'm traveling in good company. I'm not talking about Dreier at this point—[*laughter*]—I'm talking about my wife, the First Lady. Thanks for coming, Laura. We're both very excited to come to your great State, and it is a great State. We were met at the airport by Congressman Ken Calvert. I appreciate you being here, Ken. Thanks for coming. Congressman Gary Miller as well is with us, as is Congressman Joe Baca. Thank you all for being here.

I knew Brulte would amount to something one of these days. [*Laughter*] He got something named after him. I'm honored to be here with my friend Jim Brulte at the Brulte Center.

I want to thank Mayor Bill Alexander of Rancho Cucamonga. Bill, thank you for having us here today. I appreciate your hospitality. I want to thank Mayor Paul Leon of Ontario. Paul, thanks for being at the airport today.

I appreciate all the statehouse folks who are here and county folks and the local folks for joining us. Most of all, thank you all for giving me a chance to come by and discuss a really interesting opportunity for our seniors, and that is a reformed Medicare plan.

Before I get to Medicare, I got some other things I want to talk about. First, I want to remind you that the great strength of this country lies in the hearts and souls of our volunteers. We're a nation that is a compassionate, decent nation, where millions of our fellow citizens volunteer on a regular basis to help a neighbor in need. I met one such person today in Joe Graff. Joe is with us. He's been a volunteer with the Ontario Police Department for 15 years. Joe assists the police personnel with traffic control and parking tickets. If you've got one, you might want to call Joe. [*Laughter*]

But my point to you is, if you really do want to help your local community, if you want to help change America one heart at a time, take time out of your life and volunteer: Teach a child to read; tell somebody you love them; feed the hungry; and America will be a better place.

Joe, thanks for coming. I appreciate you being here.

As David said, we're praying for the folks that have been affected by this Hurricane Katrina. We're in constant contact with the local officials down there. The storm is moving through, and we're now able to assess damage or beginning to assess damage. And

I want the people to know in the affected areas that the Federal Government and the State government and the local governments will work side by side to do all we can to help get your lives back in order.

This was a terrible storm. It's a storm that hit with a lot of ferocity. It's a storm now that is moving through, and now it's the time for governments to help people get their feet on the ground.

For those of you who prayed for the folks in that area, I want to thank you for your prayers. For those of you who are concerned about whether or not we're prepared to help, don't be. We are. We're in place. We've got equipment in place, supplies in place. And once the—once we're able to assess the damage, we'll be able to move in and help those good folks in the affected areas.

David also mentioned that we're making progress overseas. And we are making progress overseas. Recently, the Iraqis came together and wrote a constitution. It's not easy to write a constitution. Look at our own history. I was reminded that several of the delegates to our own Constitutional Convention stormed out and wouldn't sign the document.

But now it's up to the Iraqi citizens to make up their minds whether or not they want to live in a constitution. It's a constitution, by the way, that guarantees women's rights. It's a constitution that guarantees religious freedom. It is a good document forged by compromise. It's a document where people came together to say, let's do what's right for a fledgling democracy. It's a document that stands in stark contrast to the days when the people's lives were run by a tyrant.

We're doing everything we can to bring the terrorists to justice. They've only got one weapon. They have no ideology of hope. They have no optimistic vision. The only thing they can do is to murder innocent people and hope that we lose our will. The success in Iraq is vital for success—for peace for our children and grandchildren. And therefore, the United States of America and our coalition will continue to work with the Iraqis to build a democracy, continue to build—to lay the foundation of peace, and continue to help the Iraqis train and prepare so they can defend their own country against the tyrants.

David's right, it was right here in 2000, I talked about Social Security. I want to repeat right quick what I said, "If you're retired and receiving a Social Security check, you have nothing to worry about. You will get your check." You'll get your check. But you need to worry about your children and your grandchildren.

See, there's a lot of baby boomers like me getting ready to retire. Matter of fact, my retirement age is in 2008. Quite convenient. [*Laughter*] And there's a lot of me. There's a lot of baby boomers. And we're living longer, and we've been promised greater benefits than previous generations. And yet there are fewer people paying into the system. Now, if you add all that up, what I'm telling you is, it's going broke for younger workers. If you're receiving your check, you're in good shape. You have not a thing to worry about. Isn't that right?

But you need to worry about the young workers who are putting money into the system that is not going to be around. I'm going to keep working this issue. I believe it is essential that a President confront problems and not pass them on to future Presidents and future Congresses, and I believe it's essential this Congress act.

So in other words, I hadn't changed my mind since I came here to talk about Social Security. The other thing I worked on with Members of Congress was to fulfill our promise to our seniors that they'd have as good a health care system as possible. Medicare is a really important program; except Medicare wasn't modern. When we got to—when I got to Washington, it was a system that was kind of stuck in the past. I'll tell you why. Medicare would pay for heart surgery but not a dime for the drugs that could prevent the heart surgery from being needed in the first place. It would pay $28,000 for ulcer surgery but not $500 for the prescription drugs that could prevent the ulcer from occurring in the first place.

That's not a modern system. That's an antiquated system. And not only that, it was costing the taxpayers more money than necessary. It seems like to me it makes fiscal sense to say, "Let's spend the $500 to prevent

the 28,000 from being needed." It's a wise use of your money, it seems like to me. But we weren't doing it that way.

And so I called upon Congress, both Republicans and Democrats, to work together to modernize the Medicare system. And what we're here to talk about is a strengthened Medicare program. And the reason we're having to travel around to do so is because I fully understand a lot of people don't want to change. In other words, people who are on Medicare say, "Look, just leave me alone. I'm not interested." And if that's the way you feel, that's fine. This is voluntary program. But what I want to hear—want you to hear is there are some really good options for you to choose from if you want to. In other words, there's a menu of opportunity now available to you.

If you've just recently signed up for Medicare, you know one of the reforms that we've put in place. It's called "Welcome to Medicare" physical. For the first time in Medicare, the Government is now paying for a physical. Makes sense, doesn't it? Why don't we test you early so we can solve the problems early?

There's preventive medicine involved with Medicare now, and that's important. But the big change is going to come when it comes to prescription drug coverage. Seniors with no drug coverage or average drug expenses will see your drug costs cut in half. In other words, you take a look at this program, you're going to have some big savings when it comes to drugs.

And for the first time ever, we got catastrophic coverage as a part of Medicare. In other words, once you're out of your pocket a certain amount of money, the Government kicks in for a lot of the remainder. You see, this is a quality-of-life bill, but it's also a peace-of-mind bill. In other words, it's a chance to really modernize the system, on the one hand, but it's also to provide security on the other. And that's why there's a catastrophic coverage in there.

If you're a low-income senior, you will virtually pay nothing for your prescription drugs. And that's important for you to know. If you're a low-income senior, the Federal Government will pick up at least 95 percent of your prescription drug coverage. There will be no gaps in your coverage. There will be low deductibles.

And so we're here to try to encourage you, as seniors, to look at the different options for you. You know, for example, we're going—you'll hear from some of your fellow citizens—or our fellow citizens up here, and they're talking about Medicare Advantage Plans. If you're on a Medicare Advantage Plan, these plans will be strengthened under this reform package. If you're getting your health care from your union or your former employer, there's incentives in the bill to provide monies to make sure that your provider still provides you the health care. In other words, it's a comprehensive piece of legislation, and it's a good one. It's a good one.

I know that you wept, like many of us wept, when we heard stories about people having to choose between food or medicine. Those days are gone because of this Medicare legislation. Now, we got us a timetable that people have got to pay attention to. It starts with this: On October the 1st, beneficiaries start receiving information about available drug plans. In other words, the Government is going to start making sure information is available for you all to understand that which is available to you, if you so choose to pick one, a different plan. And that starts October the 1st.

On November the 15th, you can start signing up for a plan that suits your needs. Again, I repeat, if you're happy with what you've got, don't worry about it. Just kind of take the paperwork and file it. [*Laughter*] But if you're interested in different options, look at the information that's being sent and know that starting November 15th, you can enroll, and starting January 1, 2006, for the first time, thanks to this piece of legislation, prescription drug benefits will—prescription drug coverage will begin for our seniors. And you got up until May 15, 2006, to sign up to pay the lowest premiums.

Now, our job is to make sure that a lot of people know what's coming. In other words, our job is to encourage people at the State level and the local level and the Federal level to educate seniors. And that's what we're doing here today.

I put a good man in charge of this program, and that's Dr. Mark McClellan. He's

from Texas—[*laughter*]—which means he knows how to get something done. He's got him a Ph.D.——

Audience members. Oooh!

The President. Now, wait a minute. [*Laughter*] If I had said California, he'd have got things done too. [*Laughter*] I'm just telling you, he can get it done. That's why he's sitting where he's sitting. He's a Ph.D. Here you got on stage a C student and a Ph.D., and look who's President. He's also an M.D. But he's also responsible for making sure that information gets out. By the way, if you're interested in information, call 1–800–MEDICARE, or medicare.gov.

Mark, tell them what you've been doing.

Dr. Mark B. McClellan. We've been working to make sure that people know about the options that are coming, and there are some really good options for people here in California by the way, where I used to practice medicine before coming into Government, right here in northern California——

The President. See? [*Laughter*]

Dr. McClellan. ——and in southern California as well. We've got a number of plan choices that are going to be available that are a lot less expensive than people thought.

When this bill was first passed, people were talking about the coverage costing around $37 a month. Well, what we know from the plans that are going to be available here in California, the costs are going to average only around $25 a month out here, and there will be plan choices available to seniors and people with a disability for less than $20 a month. And many of them will provide extra coverage.

So this is worth taking a look at. And as you said, Mr. President, it's designed to work with the coverage that you have now. If you're lucky enough to have drug coverage from an employer, you can now get help from Medicare in paying for that employer coverage. If you've got a Medicare Advantage Plan, one of the Medicare health plans that offers some drug coverage now, well, those plans are going to offer more drug coverage next year. So no matter what situation you're in, you can get help with your drug costs from Medicare, and that help is looking especially good right here in California.

The President. One of the things that—if you want to apply for the benefits for low-income seniors, you have to fill out a form. I know that generally frightens people. It frightens me. A four-page form, that sounds like a lot. You'll be pleased to hear it's big print—16 questions on 4 pages. And the Social Security Administration has mailed out those forms.

Dr. McClellan. That's right. They've sent letters out to millions of people who they think are eligible for this coverage, because a lot of people who don't think of themselves as low income, but are struggling with their drug costs, are actually eligible for this. The eligibility goes up to people living on incomes up to close to $20,000 a year for a couple. So that's most people who are trying to get by month to month just on their Social Security check.

The President. So it's really important to look into this program, and it's important to take a look at the forms. And for those of you out there who are trying to help our seniors, it's important for you to understand what I'm talking about. Part of making sure this works and part of making sure that the information is spread throughout our society, is sons and daughters need to pay attention to this program. You need to do your duty as a son or a daughter and get this information to your moms or your dads. That's what you need to do. You need to make sure that you help investigate what's possible and not miss a really good opportunity.

This is a good deal. And therefore, you need to follow through on it. And part of the process is to fill out this form. And it's not all that hard, but if you get stuck, there's a way to get unstuck on filling out the form.

Dr. McClellan. That's right. Just fill out the questions that you think you can answer. Send it in. Social Security will call you back and help you fill out the rest.

And Mr. President, this is extra help worth about $4,000 altogether, so it's about $1,000 a page for people filling out this application. It's very comprehensive drug coverage, no premiums, no deductibles, just a few dollars, usually, for the cost of your prescription, all for just a four-page form.

The President. Mark has been on the road with the Secretary of Health and

Human Services and others on a grassroots campaign. Because we understood when this started coming out that we needed to do a lot of education. Again I repeat, some folks simply don't want any change, and I understand that completely. But I urge you to take a look, and you'll find more options available. You see, the more options that are available, the more likely there's going to get—you're going to get what you want. And if you're a low-income senior, you've got to take advantage of the Government program. It is a good deal.

Now, part of making sure that we're able to get the word out is we're rallying grassroots organizations. One such organization is Larry Krutchik's organization.

Larry, thank you for coming. Tell the people what it is.

[*At this point, Larry Krutchik, regional director, Medicare Today, made brief remarks.*]

The President. I appreciate that. Isn't that great? I mean, to me, it's—I appreciate you doing that, and I want you to thank the volunteers who are working on this program on behalf of the seniors who are going to benefit from it.

If you're going to a church and you're interested in the project, why don't you help the elderly in your church understand that which is coming? Why don't you take a little time and find out the programs available and find out—get the forms and help somebody? This is a good deal. I know it may—you're probably saying, "Another politician saying it's a good deal." [*Laughter*] I'm telling you, it is. And it makes sense to pay attention to it.

And we understand we have an obligation to get out and make the information available. It's your choice. The Government is not telling you what to do. But the Government is saying, "Here's some interesting opportunities for you."

And Larry, I want to thank you for being out there and making those opportunities available.

We got another fellow here, Ken Morris. Ken, thanks for coming. What do you do to make a living?

[*Ken Morris, pharmacist, made brief remarks.*]

The President. One of the interesting places where we're able to make this program better known is at the pharmacies. I mean, it makes sense if you're going to pick up a prescription drug and the pharmacist is the point of contact and the pharmacist says, "Hey, look, here's a new thing coming down." And we've got a lot of pharmacists from around the United States who have signed up to help, and I want to thank the pharmacists for doing that.

What do you find when you hear—give us a sense of what you're hearing out there.

Mr. Morris. Well, it's long overdue. The seniors are welcoming this plan with open arms, as are health care professionals such as myself. It's heartbreaking for me to deal with seniors that come in, as you had mentioned, maybe with a heart surgery and to find out that they've now got a list of a half-dozen medications and they're trying to make a decision on which ones to take because they can't afford to take all of them. So it's tough; it's a long time coming.

The President. But are people beginning to become aware that there's a new Medicare bill that had been passed and some options are now becoming available?

Mr. Morris. Yes, I think so. As we get a little closer, I think, to October, I think the questions will start ramping up. But at this point, people have been getting mailings. We just need to make sure that they understand exactly what the plan is about.

The President. Yes. There's a great opportunity for those of you out there who want to help a senior citizen in your neighborhood, is to help. Get on the Internet, medicare.gov. Look it up. Find out what we're talking about. Make sure what we're talking about is exactly what the Government has got available. I think it is. I think you're going find out what we're—what Mark and I are telling you is exactly what's going to happen. But it's a fantastic opportunity.

And again, I want to thank the pharmacists. I want to thank the community activists, the grassroots organizers. This, by the way, isn't a Republican deal or a Democrat deal; this is good for America. It doesn't matter what your party is when it comes to Medicare. We just want to make sure, and the Government has an obligation to make sure,

you got a modern system that works well so that you can live in dignity. They ought to call this the "You've Retired in Dignity" bill, because it's a good piece of legislation.

And we've got some folks up here who are concerned about their Social Security or Medicare. Joan Gest is with us. Thanks for coming.

Joan Gest. Thank you, Mr. President.

The President. Proud you're here. She's——

Ms. Gest. Very happy to be here.

The President. Her sole source of income is Social Security, by the way. I could tell—she was looking at me when I first walked in the room to meet her; she was wondering whether or not old George W. is going to take away her Social Security check.

Ms. Gest. I sure hope not.

The President. The answer is no. You're going to get your check.

Ms. Gest. Thank you, sir.

The President. You deserve it.

Ms. Gest. And I'm on Medicare, and there's been times that I've had drugs that I refused to take because they were too expensive.

The President. Yes.

Ms. Gest. And I think this plan could help me. And as a volunteer at Kaiser Hospital and as a community representative for downtown Fontana, I'm hoping to pass this word along to some of our organizations in town and some of our service groups and some of our senior citizens homes. And I hope that I'm able to do that.

The President. See, that's great, isn't it? Here she is somebody who was wondering what the program means for her and as well is willing to spread the word. And I hope people who are—thank you for doing that. Thank you for volunteering too.

Ms. Gest. Thank you. I'm a mother of five children.

The President. Five children.

Ms. Gest. Five step-children.

The President. Fantastic.

Ms. Gest. Twenty-seven grandchildren.

The President. Whew.

Ms. Gest. And three great-grandchildren. And I have a son, Mike, out in the audience today that——

The President. Mike listening to you?

Ms. Gest. He better be.

The President. Yes. [*Laughter*] Kind of like my family. [*Laughter*]

Joan, one of the most things—proud things—one of the things she was most proud to tell me about was the fact that she loves to volunteer. And that's one of the great parts of the American spirit, is people like Joan are willing to—she's willing to take time to make somebody's life better. So I want to thank you for that. Thank you for passing the word.

Ms. Gest. Thank you.

The President. You betcha.

Myrtle Jones. Where do you live, Myrtle?

Myrtle Jones. I live in Rancho Cucamonga.

The President. Yes. Right here with the home folks.

Ms. Jones. Yes, I am. And I've participated here—since 1988 I've belonged here.

The President. That's good.

Ms. Jones. And I'm a retired management. I managed three dry cleaning establishments, and then I retired and did some in-home nursing and retired from that. And now I'm an elder in my church, and I volunteer here and do a lot of work here. And I also have three wonderful children, Rod, Dorothy, and Richard. I have six grandchildren, five great-grandchildren.

The President. Whew.

Ms. Jones. And I have managed on my own without the help from them. [*Laughter*]

The President. Yes, take that. [*Laughter*]

[*Ms. Jones made brief remarks.*]

The President. Myrtle, you need to get that four-page form, and you need to look at it, and you need to fill it out.

Ms. Jones. I will.

The President. Because I think you're going to find the strengthened Medicare program is going to help you a lot.

Ms. Jones. Oh, it will.

The President. It really will.

Ms. Jones. It really will.

The President. The purpose of coming here today—thank you all for doing this, by the way. The purpose of coming was to encourage—good job. The purpose of coming was to inform as many folks as we can, obviously, in person and on TV, that Medicare

has been strengthened, and Medicare has been modernized, and that if you're really interested in helping a senior or a senior helping yourself, look into this plan. Look into what's available.

And you can find out on medicare.gov, or you can call 1–800–MEDICARE. If you get a form, fill it out. When they send you a form to determine whether or not you're going to be eligible for this enhanced drug benefit from the Federal Government, fill it out. It doesn't do any harm to fill it out, and if you need help, somebody will help you fill it out.

The Government has an obligation to our seniors to provide a health care system. We have done that for years. Now we took it upon ourselves to make sure the health care system we provided was strong and modern, and we have done that. And pretty soon, people are going to be able to make choices if they want to. And our job at the Government level and job at the grassroot level and jobs in the community centers and community groups is to help people understand what's available.

I want to thank you all for giving me and Laura a chance to come back to Rancho Cucamonga. It's a beautiful place you got here. We appreciate your hospitality. May God bless you all. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:40 p.m. at the James L. Brulte Senior Center. In his remarks, he referred to former California State Senator Jim Brulte; Mayor William "Bill" J. Alexander of Rancho Cucamonga, CA; Mayor Paul S. Leon of Ontario, CA; and former President Saddam Hussein of Iraq.

Proclamation 7919—National Ovarian Cancer Awareness Month, 2005

August 29, 2005

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

Ovarian cancer is one of the leading causes of cancer deaths among women in the United States. Each year, thousands of women are diagnosed with ovarian cancer, and thousands die from the disease. During National Ovarian Cancer Awareness Month, we strive to raise awareness of ovarian cancer and promote early detection and treatment of this disease.

Early detection is essential to the successful treatment of ovarian cancer. The 5-year survival rate is higher than 90 percent for ovarian cancer patients whose disease is caught during the first stage of development. Most ovarian cancer cases are diagnosed at an advanced stage, however, because no reliable screening test exists for the disease. Because the early signs of ovarian cancer are easy to miss and often resemble the signs of other conditions, it is important for women to talk with their doctors about detection and be aware of the risk factors and symptoms of this cancer.

There is more we need to learn about how best to prevent, detect, and treat ovarian cancer. The National Cancer Institute (NCI) is currently sponsoring a study on genetic and environmental factors that may increase the risk of ovarian cancer. In addition, the NCI is sponsoring clinical trials to explore new ways to screen for and detect ovarian cancer. Researchers are studying new treatment options, including biological therapies, anticancer drugs, vaccines, and other therapies to treat resistant forms of ovarian cancer. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention will spend almost $4.6 million, and the Department of Defense's Ovarian Cancer Research Program will invest an estimated $10 million.

As we observe National Ovarian Cancer Awareness Month, we recognize the courage and strength of women battling ovarian cancer, and of their families and friends who love and support them. Our Nation is grateful for the hard work and commitment of our dedicated researchers and medical professionals. With continued effort, we can raise awareness of ovarian cancer and find new ways to prevent and treat this deadly disease.

Now, Therefore, I, George W. Bush, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim September 2005 as National Ovarian Cancer Awareness Month. I call upon government officials,

businesses, communities, health care professionals, educators, volunteers, and all people of the United States to continue our Nation's strong commitment to preventing and treating ovarian cancer.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand this twenty-ninth day of August, in the year of our Lord two thousand five, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and thirtieth.

George W. Bush

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 10:36 a.m., August 30, 2005]

NOTE: This proclamation was published in the *Federal Register* on August 31.

Proclamation 7920—National Prostate Cancer Awareness Month, 2005

August 29, 2005

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

Prostate cancer is the second leading cause of cancer-related deaths among American men. This year, thousands of men will be diagnosed with prostate cancer, and thousands will die from the disease. While great strides have been made in the battle against prostate cancer, we have more work to do. During National Prostate Cancer Awareness Month, we renew our commitment to fight prostate cancer by finding better ways to prevent, detect, and treat this deadly disease.

My Administration is committed to funding research for prevention and better treatments for prostate cancer. This year, the National Institutes of Health will invest an estimated $381 million in prostate cancer research, including $310 million at the National Cancer Institute. The Department of Defense's Prostate Cancer Research Program will spend an estimated $85 million, and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention will devote an estimated $14 million toward prostate cancer research. Scientists are examining risk factors to identify ways to prevent prostate cancer, and they are finding ways to detect this disease earlier, when it is easier to treat. In addition, newer treatments are helping to slow or stop the spread of prostate cancer in men with advanced stages of the disease. This progress offers hope to men who are living with prostate cancer and those who are at risk.

As we observe National Prostate Cancer Awareness Month, I encourage all men, especially those over the age of 50, to talk with their doctors about the risk of prostate cancer and the appropriate screenings. I commend those who fight this disease, and I applaud the dedication of researchers, health care providers, and all who are working to increase our knowledge of prostate cancer. By raising awareness and supporting research, we can save lives.

Now, Therefore, I, George W. Bush, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim September 2005 as National Prostate Cancer Awareness Month. I call upon government officials, businesses, communities, health care professionals, educators, volunteers, and all people of the United States to reaffirm our Nation's strong and continuing commitment to treat and prevent prostate cancer.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand this twenty-ninth day of August, in the year of our Lord two thousand five, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and thirtieth.

George W. Bush

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 10:36 a.m., August 30, 2005]

NOTE: This proclamation was published in the *Federal Register* on August 31.

Proclamation 7921—National Alcohol and Drug Addiction Recovery Month, 2005

August 29, 2005

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

The devastating effects of alcohol and drug addiction have destroyed the lives and families of countless Americans. During National Alcohol and Drug Addiction Recovery Month, we recognize the dangers of substance abuse and renew the hope of overcoming addiction for individuals across our Nation. This year's theme, "Join the Voices for Recovery: Healing Lives, Families and Communities," encourages those striving to recover from this disease and recognizes the many families, support organizations, faith-based and community groups, and volunteers working to help overcome addiction.

Substance abuse leads to a cycle of addiction and despair that too often causes disease and death among young people. The Helping America's Youth initiative, led by First Lady Laura Bush, is promoting positive youth development and combating alcohol and drug addiction. This initiative is helping our children to make healthy choices and build lives of purpose. To aid citizens seeking treatment and recovery for substance abuse, my Administration also has provided $200 million over the past 2 years for the Access to Recovery program. My 2006 budget requests an additional $150 million for this program to further expand treatment choices. Directing resources to individuals allows them to choose a program that suits their needs and increases their chances of success. In addition, we have increased opportunities for communities and faith-based providers to aid those suffering from addiction.

I encourage all Americans to support individuals striving to overcome addiction and the groups that are helping to fight alcohol and drug addiction. By working together, we can continue to build a more compassionate society that transforms lives and provides health, hope, and healing to those who hurt.

Now, Therefore, I, George W. Bush, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim September 2005 as National Alcohol and Drug Addiction Recovery Month. I call upon the people of the United States to observe this month with appropriate programs and activities.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand this twenty-ninth day of August, in the year of our Lord two thousand five, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and thirtieth.

George W. Bush

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 9:05 a.m., August 31, 2005]

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

Memorandum on Waiving Prohibition on Use of FY 2005 Economic Support Funds With Respect to Jordan

August 29, 2005

Presidential Determination No. 2005–33

Memorandum for the Secretary of State

Subject: Waiving Prohibition on Use of FY 2005 Economic Support Funds with Respect to Jordan

Consistent with the authority vested in me by section 574 of the Foreign Operations, Export Financing, and Related Programs Appropriations Act, 2005 (the "Act"), Division D of Public Law 108–447, I hereby:

- Determine that it is important to the national security interests of the United States to waive, for a period of 6 months from the date of this determination, the prohibition of section 574(a) of the Act with respect to Jordan; and
- Waive the prohibition with respect to this country for that period.

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

NOTE: This memorandum was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on August 30.

Remarks on the 60th Anniversary of V-J Day in San Diego, California

August 30, 2005

Thank you all. Thanks for the warm welcome. It's good to be back in California, good to be here at North Island. This is the birthplace of naval aviation, and I want to thank you for making this son of a naval aviator feel right at home.

This morning our hearts and prayers are with our fellow citizens along the Gulf Coast who have suffered so much from Hurricane Katrina. These are trying times for the people of these communities. We know that many are anxious to return to their homes. It's not possible at this moment. Right now our priority is on saving lives, and we are still in the midst of search and rescue operations. I urge everyone in the affected areas to continue to follow instructions from State and local authorities.

The Federal, State, and local governments are working side by side to do all we can to help people get back on their feet, and we have got a lot of work to do. Our teams and equipment are in place, and we're beginning to move in the help that people need. Americans who wish to help can call 1–800–HELP–NOW, or log on to redcross.org, or get in touch with the Salvation Army. The good folks in Louisiana and Mississippi and Alabama and other affected areas are going to need the help and compassion and prayers of our fellow citizens.

As we deliver relief to our citizens to the south, our troops are defending all our citizens from threats abroad. In the war on terror, all of you gathered here today are playing a critical role. Our naval aviators are displaying their fantastic skill in bringing justice to our enemies. Our sailors on Navy ships are patrolling the high seas. You're maintaining those ships and keeping them ready for battle. You're serving on special operations teams that are hunting the Taliban and Al Qaida fighters in the mountains of Afghanistan. And our Marine units are bringing our terrorists to justice in Iraq. However you are serving, each of you is defending our Nation and bringing honor to the uniform, and your Commander in Chief and your country is proud of your service.

I'm also proud to stand with those whose achievements we commemorate today, the military veterans of World War II. In war, America called you from your farms and your schools and your factories to defeat two of the most ruthless armies the world has known. In victory, America counted on you to extend a helping hand, to lift up a defeated foe. And in a lasting peace that has been your greatest legacy, America confirmed the power of freedom to transform the bitterest of enemies into the closest of friends.

Your victory came at great cost, and many of the heroes who fought by your side would not live to make the return journey home. More than 400,000 Americans gave their lives in that war, and some of them are buried a few miles from here at Fort Rosecrans National Cemetery. At a funeral sermon delivered after a battle that had taken the lives of thousands of Americans, a rabbi said, "Out of this, and from this suffering and sorrow of those who mourn this, will come, we promise, the birth of a new freedom for the sons of men everywhere."

Today, your hair is whitened. Your steps have slowed. Yet you have seen, in your lifetime, the rabbi's promise come true. The freedom that was born of your sacrifice has lifted millions of God's children across the Earth. This freedom is your monument to your fallen friends, your gift to their children and grandchildren, and your sacred bond with generations of patriots past and present who have worn the Nation's uniform.

As we look into your faces, we see the same quiet resolve that defeated our enemies, and we count it a privilege to be the citizens of the country that you served. We pray that your comrades you have lost found peace with their Creator, and we honor your sacrifice by recommitting ourselves to the great ideals for which you fought and bled.

I'm honored today to be traveling with the First Lady of the United States, Laura Bush. I want to thank Admiral Zortman, the commander of the Naval Air Force, U.S. Pacific Fleet, for his introduction. And thank you for your service, Admiral.

I'm proud to be here today with a man who is doing an excellent job for the United States military, the Secretary of Defense, Donald Rumsfeld. On V-J Day in 1945, Secretary Rumsfeld was selling newspapers at the Coronado Ferry, Coronado, California. He went on to be a Navy pilot. And today, he's a trusted adviser in my Cabinet. Mr. Secretary, proud to have you here.

I want to thank the Chairman of the Armed Services Committee, Duncan Hunter. Congressman Hunter is with us today. Congressman Duncan Hunter is, today, here with his dad, Robert Hunter, who served in World War II. And he has a son who is a proud marine in Iraq.

I want to thank Secretary Tom Johnson of the California Department of Veteran Affairs. I want to thank Mayor Tom Smisek and his wife, Peggy. He's the mayor of Coronado. I appreciate you, Mr. Mayor.

I want to thank Vice Admiral Barry Costello, Rear Admiral Mike Miller, Rear Admiral Len Hering, Captain Tim Alexander. I want to thank Command Master Chief Mick Fulton, Chief Petty Officer Swisher. I want to thank all the men and women who wear the uniform for greeting us today.

We're proud to be in the company of Medal of Honor recipients Robert Modrzejewski, Jay Vargas, Red Millett, John Finn, John McGinty. Thank you for coming. Thank you for your courage.

Finally, I want to thank Sybil Stockdale, the wife of Admiral James Stockdale, for being with us today.

Sixty years ago this Friday, General Douglas MacArthur accepted the Japanese surrender aboard the USS *Missouri* in Tokyo Bay. With Japan's surrender, the last of our enemies in World War II was defeated, and a world war that began for America in the Pacific came to an end in the Pacific.

As we mark this anniversary, we are again a Nation at war. Once again, war came to our shores with a surprise attack that killed thousands in cold blood. Once again, we face determined enemies who follow a ruthless ideology that despises everything America stands for. Once again, America and our allies are waging a global campaign with forces deployed on virtually every continent. And once again, we will not rest until victory is America's and our freedom is secure.

In the midst of this struggle, we have confidence in our cause because we know that America has faced down brutal enemies before. We have confidence in our cause because we've seen the power of freedom to overcome the darkness of tyranny and terror. And we have confidence in our cause because we know the character and courage of those who wear the uniform of the United States military.

Fifty years ago, we saw that character and that courage in men such as Leon Stone, who was a young Navy sailor aboard the battleship *West Virginia*, supporting the marines at Iwo Jima. We saw that courage in men such as Jim Simpson, who was one of those marines. They didn't know each other, but they came together to fight for America's security. They came together to join a mighty force that defeated the Japanese empire. Jim Simpson and Leon Stone did finally meet one day when Leon's son and Jim's daughter got married.

And today, their grandson, Captain Randy Stone, carries on a proud family tradition. Captain Stone is a marine officer now serving in Iraq. He knows that he and his generation are doing the same vital work in this war on terror that his grandparents did in World War II. He also knows how this struggle will end. Randy says, "I know we will win, because I see it in the eyes of the marines every morning. In their eyes is the sparkle of victory."

Captain Stone proudly wears the uniform just as his grandfathers did at Iwo Jima. He's guided by the same convictions they carried into battle. He shares the same willingness to serve a cause greater than himself. Many of you grew up with dads and granddads who have similar stories about their World War II service. They're the modest sons of a peaceful country. And a grateful nation thanks them for their sacrifice that preserved our freedom and our way of life.

The men and women who served in World War II belonged to a generation that kept its faith even when liberty's ultimate triumph was far from clear. When America was attacked at Pearl Harbor, our country was just emerging from a depression. More than half a dozen nations had larger armies than we

did. In Asia and Europe, country after country had fallen before the disciplined armies of the militaristic regimes. These events led many to conclude that freedom had seen its day and that the future belonged to the hard men in Berlin and Tokyo.

Franklin Roosevelt refused to accept that democracy was finished. His optimism reflected his belief that the enemy's will to power could not withstand our will to live in freedom. He told the American people that our liberty depended on the success of liberty in other lands. And he called on Americans to defend that liberty, and millions answered the call. Within 4 years, America would recover from the devastation of Pearl Harbor. Within 4 years, we would fight and win a world war on two fronts.

Our victory in Asia was a particular triumph for the United States Navy. After Pearl Harbor, our Pacific Fleet was nearly destroyed, and the enemy appeared invincible. Those were dark days for freedom, but the darkness would not long prevail. From the daring first attack on Japanese soil led by Jimmy Doolittle and launched from the deck of the USS *Hornet*, to the Battle of Midway, to the flag-raising of Iwo Jima, our troops in the Pacific gave Americans back home reason to believe that President Roosevelt was right, that democracy was the most unconquerable of all forms of human society.

President Roosevelt was guided in victory in World War II by certain timeless principles. First, President Roosevelt believed that free nations could muster the resolve to defend themselves. In his day, that belief was sorely tested by a ruthless and determined enemy. Our troops in the Pacific found themselves up against a ferocity they had never before encountered—kamikaze pilots on suicidal missions, soldiers who fought to the last man, commanders animated by a fanatical belief that their nation was ordained to rule the Asian Continent. This enemy took many lives and left many grieving families. Yet in the end, they were no match for the forces of the United States and our allies. In the end, they were defeated by Americans who only months before had been farmers and bank clerks and factory hands. And in the end, the victorious children of democracy would help their defeated enemies rebuild and bring the taste of freedom to millions.

One of the first to recognize this truth was a member of Japan's surrender delegation aboard the USS *Missouri*. He went to the ceremony expecting to hear how the allies intended to take their vengeance on the defeated. Instead he heard General MacArthur speak about a future of freedom for Japan, and he realized the true source of America's military might. He wrote, "We weren't beaten on the battlefield by the dint of superior arms; we were defeated in the spiritual conquest by virtue of a nobler idea." In World War II, wherever our troops raised the flag of victory, they would also sow the seeds of liberty, and as a result, the world is better off.

Secondly, President Roosevelt believed that the call to freedom is universal. Many of our closest allies did not agree with him about this, and the political map of Asia seemed to confirm their skepticism. At the beginning of the war, the Pacific had only two democracies: Australia and New Zealand. Even in nations where the rule was not harsh, the best that most Asian people could expect was benevolent colonialism. The Japanese claimed they were ridding the continent of foreign colonialism. But millions of Chinese and Burmese and other Asian people soon learned that Tokyo had simply replaced Western colonialism with a version that was often more harsh and repressive.

President Roosevelt, and later President Truman, wisely resolved that we would not make that mistake in our treatment of a defeated Japan. They understood that the sacrifices of Allied forces would mean nothing unless we used our victory to help the Japanese people transform their nation from tyranny to freedom. There were many doubters. American and Japanese experts claimed that the Japanese weren't ready for democracy.

In a letter to a friend back home, one of our soldiers on the ground offered a different view. Sergeant Richard Leonard's brother had been killed in fighting the Japanese, but after being stationed in Japan and meeting Japanese people, he found he could not hate them. He wrote, "Sure, we've got to occupy their country and watch them. But at the same time, we've got to help them and do

everything possible to reconstruct them as a peace-loving nation." Sergeant Leonard was right. And America did just what he thought we should do. And as we look at what he and his generation accomplished in Japan, we know it is a mistake to believe that some people are not fit for equality and freedom our Creator intended for all.

Third, President Roosevelt believed that free nations are peaceful nations that would not threaten America. He knew that it was the lack of democracy in Japan that allowed an unelected group of militarists to take control of the state, threaten their neighbors, attack America, and plunge an entire region into war. And he knew that the best way to bring peace and stability to the region was by bringing freedom to Japan.

Democracy takes different forms in different cultures. Japanese democracy would be different from American democracy. The Japanese constitution would guarantee the universal freedoms that are the foundation of all genuine democracies, while, at the same time, reflecting the unique traditions and needs of the Japanese people. It allowed for both an electoral democracy and a heredity monarchy. It set Japan on the path to a free society.

With every step toward freedom, the Japanese economy flourished. With every step toward freedom, the Japanese became a model for others in the region. With every step toward freedom, the Japanese became a valued member of the world community, a force for peace and stability in the region, and a trusted and reliable ally of the United States of America.

I've experienced this transformation in a very personal way. During World War II, my dad was one of the Navy's youngest pilots and was shot down over the Pacific. At the same time, an official named Junya Koizumi served in Japan's legislative assembly. Today, their sons serve as the elected leaders of two free nations. Prime Minister Koizumi is a respected leader and one of my best friends in the international community. Our two democracies are among the world's closest allies. And all Americans are safer and more secure because the Japanese people are free.

Today, we must not forget the lessons of the past, and the lesson of this experience is clear: The most powerful weapon in the arsenal of democracy is the spirit of liberty. In the 20th century, the spirit of liberty worked to spread freedom from Japan and Germany to Eastern Europe and Latin America and Southeast Asia and Africa. And the spirit of liberty is at work today. Across the broader Middle East, we can see freedom's power to transform nations and deliver hope to people who have not known it. In Afghanistan and Iraq and Lebanon and the Palestinian Territories, people have gone to the polls and chosen their leaders in free elections. Their example is inspiring millions across that region to claim their liberty as well, and they will have it.

In Iraq, people have come together to write a constitution that guarantees freedom for all Iraqi citizens. The document they have produced protects fundamental human freedoms, including freedom for women, freedom of religion, freedom of assembly, freedom of conscience, and freedom of expression. This constitution is the result of democratic debate and compromise, and the Iraqi citizens can be proud of what they have accomplished.

As freedom advances across a troubled part of the world, it is once again opposed by fanatical adherence of a murderous ideology. And once again, the stakes are high. Now, as then, our enemies have made their fight a test of American credibility and resolve. Now, as then, they are trying to intimidate free people and break our will. And now, as then, they will fail.

They will fail because the terrorists of our century are making the same mistake that the followers of other totalitarian ideologies made in the last century. They believe that democracies are inherently weak and corrupt and can be brought to their knees. They looked at our response after the hostage crisis in Iran, the bombings of the Marine barracks in Lebanon, the first World Trade Center attack, the killing of American soldiers in Somalia, the destruction of two U.S. embassies in Africa, and the attack on the USS *Cole*. They concluded that free societies lack the courage and character to defend themselves against a determined enemy. Here are the words of Usama bin Laden that explain why

he believed he could get away with the attacks of September the 11th, 2001: "We've seen in the last decade the decline of the American Government and the weakness of the American soldier, who is ready to wage cold wars and unprepared to fight long wars... After a few blows they ran in defeat... [They forgot] about being the world leader..." End quote.

After September the 11th, 2001, we've taught the terrorists a very different lesson. America will not run in defeat, and we will not forget our responsibilities. We have brought down two murderous regimes. We're driving terrorists from their sanctuaries. We're putting the terrorists on the run all across the world.

The terrorists and insurgents are now waging a brutal campaign of terror in Iraq. They kill innocent men and women and children in the hopes of intimidating Iraqis. They're trying to scare them away from democracy. They're trying to break the will of the American people. Their goal is to turn Iraq into a failed state, like Afghanistan was under the Taliban. If Zarqawi and bin Laden gain control of Iraq, they would create a new training ground for future terrorist attacks. They'd seize oil fields to fund their ambitions. They could recruit more terrorists by claiming an historic victory over the United States and our coalition.

Our goal is clear as well. We will defeat the terrorists. We'll build a free Iraq that will fight terrorists instead of giving them aid and sanctuary. A free Iraq will offer people throughout the Middle East a hopeful alternative to the hateful ideology being peddled by the terrorists. A free Iraq will show that when America gives its word, America keeps its word.

That choice—this is the choice we face: Do we return to the pre-September the 11th mindset of isolation and retreat, or do we continue to take the fight to the enemy and support our allies in the broader Middle East? I've made my decision. We will stay on the offensive. We will stand with the people of Iraq, and we will prevail.

We will prevail because this generation is determined to meet the threats of our time. We will prevail because this generation wants to leave a more hopeful world for our children and grandchildren. We will prevail because the desire to live in freedom is embedded in the soul of every man, woman, and child on this Earth. And we will prevail because our freedom is defended by the greatest force for liberation that humankind has ever known, the men and women of the United States Armed Forces.

In this war, some of our best citizens have made the ultimate sacrifice. We mourn the loss of every life. We pray for their loved ones. And we will honor their sacrifice by completing the mission and laying the foundation for peace.

Sixty years ago, American forces made the same type of sacrifice and helped liberate two continents and made our world a more peaceful place. The men and women of World War II brought honor to the uniform and to our flag and to our country. With each passing day, their ranks thin, but the peace they built endures. And we will never let the new enemies of a new century destroy with cowardice what these Americans built with courage.

Sixty years after V-J Day, our military veterans can take heart from the example they see right here in San Diego. Those of you who wear the Nation's uniform today are every bit as selfless and dedicated to liberty as the generations that came before. And when we will look at you, we know our freedom is in good hands.

It is men and women like you who keep us free. It is the spirit of liberty that keeps you strong, and it is the history that gives us confidence to know that in the vital work of spreading liberty, America and those of us who love freedom will prevail.

May God bless you all, and may God continue to bless America.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:04 a.m. at Naval Air Station North Island. In his remarks, he referred to Vice Adm. James M. Zortman, USN, commander, Naval Air Forces and Naval Air Force, U.S. Pacific Fleet; Mayor Tom Smisek of Coronado, CA; Vice Adm. Barry M. Costello, USN, commander, Third Fleet; Rear Adm. Michael H. Miller, USN, commander, Carrier Strike Group Seven and USS *Ronald Reagan* Strike Group; Rear Adm. Leendert "Len" R. Hering, Sr., USN, commander, Navy Regional Northwest and Naval Surface Group, Pacific Northwest;

Capt. Townsend "Tim" G. Alexander, USN, commanding officer, and Master Chief Michael "Mick" F. Fulton, USN, command master chief, Naval Base Coronado; Chief Petty Officer Chet Swisher, USN, (Ret.), director, Veterans Memorial Center, San Diego, CA; Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi of Japan; Usama bin Laden, leader of the Al Qaida terrorist organization; and senior Al Qaida associate Abu Musab Al Zarqawi.

Remarks on the Relief Efforts for Hurricane Katrina

August 31, 2005

I've just received an update from Secretary Chertoff and other Cabinet Secretaries involved on the latest developments in Louisiana, Mississippi, and Alabama. As we flew here today, I also asked the pilot to fly over the Gulf Coast region so I could see firsthand the scope and magnitude of the devastation.

The vast majority of New Orleans, Louisiana, is under water. Tens of thousands of homes and businesses are beyond repair. A lot of the Mississippi Gulf Coast has been completely destroyed. Mobile is flooded. We are dealing with one of the worst natural disasters in our Nation's history.

And that's why I've called the Cabinet together. The people in the affected regions expect the Federal Government to work with the State government and local government with an effective response. I have directed Secretary of Homeland Security Mike Chertoff to chair a Cabinet-level task force to coordinate all our assistance from Washington. FEMA Director Mike Brown is in charge of all Federal response and recovery efforts in the field. I've instructed them to work closely with State and local officials as well as with the private sector to ensure that we're helping, not hindering, recovery efforts. This recovery will take a long time. This recovery will take years.

Our efforts are now focused on three priorities: Our first priority is to save lives. We're assisting local officials in New Orleans in evacuating any remaining citizens from the affected area. I want to thank the State of Texas and particularly Harris County and the city of Houston and officials with the Houston Astrodome for providing shelter to those citizens who found refuge in the Superdome in Louisiana. Buses are on the way to take those people from New Orleans to Houston.

FEMA has deployed more than 50 disaster medical assistance teams from all across the country to help those in the affected areas. FEMA has deployed more than 25 urban search and rescue teams with more than 1,000 personnel to help save as many lives as possible. The United States Coast Guard is conducting search and rescue missions. They're working alongside local officials, local assets. The Coast Guard has rescued nearly 2,000 people to date.

The Department of Defense is deploying major assets to the region. These include the USS *Bataan* to conduct search and rescue missions, eight swift water rescue teams, the Iwo Jima Amphibious Readiness Group to help with disaster response equipment, and the hospital ship USNS *Comfort* to help provide medical care.

The National Guard has nearly 11,000 Guardsmen on State active duty to assist Governors and local officials with security and disaster response efforts. FEMA and the Army Corps of Engineers are working around the clock with Louisiana officials to repair the breaches in the levees so we can stop the flooding in New Orleans.

Our second priority is to sustain lives by ensuring adequate food, water, shelter, and medical supplies for survivors and dedicated citizens—dislocated citizens. FEMA is moving supplies and equipment into the hardest hit areas. The Department of Transportation has provided more than 400 trucks to move 1,000 truckloads containing 5.4 million Meals Ready to Eat or MREs, 13.4 million liters of water, 10,400 tarps, 3.4 million pounds of ice, 144 generators, 20 containers of pre-positioned disaster supplies, 135,000 blankets, and 11,000 cots. And we're just starting.

There are more than 78,000 people now in shelters. HHS and CDC are working with local officials to identify operating hospital facilities so we can help them, help the nurses and doctors provide necessary medical care. They're distributing medical supplies, and they're executing a public health plan to control disease and other health-related issues that might arise.

Our third priority is executing a comprehensive recovery effort. We're focusing

on restoring power and lines of communication that have been knocked out during the storm. We'll be repairing major roads and bridges and other essential means of transportation as quickly as possible.

There's a lot of work we're going to have to do. In my flyover, I saw a lot of destruction on major infrastructure. Repairing the infrastructure, of course, is going to be a key priority.

The Department of Energy is approving loans from the Strategic Petroleum Reserve to limit disruptions in crude supplies for refineries. A lot of crude production has been shut down because of the storm. I instructed Secretary Bodman to work with refiners, people who need crude oil, to alleviate any shortage through loans. The Environmental Protection Agency has granted a nationwide waiver for fuel blends to make more gasoline and diesel fuel available throughout the country. This will help take some pressure off of gas price. But our citizens must understand, this storm has disrupted the capacity to make gasoline and distribute gasoline.

We're also developing a comprehensive plan to immediately help displaced citizens. This will include housing and education and health care and other essential needs. I've directed the folks in my Cabinet to work with local folks, local officials, to develop a comprehensive strategy to rebuild the communities affected. And there's going to be a lot of rebuilding done. I can't tell you how devastating the sights were.

I want to thank the communities in surrounding States that have welcomed their neighbors during an hour of need. A lot of folks left the affected areas and found refuge with a relative or a friend, and I appreciate you doing that. I also want to thank the American Red Cross and the Salvation Army and the Catholic Charities and all other members of the armies of compassion. I think the folks in the affected areas are going to be overwhelmed when they realize how many Americans want to help them.

At this stage in the recovery efforts, it's important for those who want to contribute, to contribute cash. You can contribute cash to a charity of your choice, but make sure you designate that gift for hurricane relief. You can call 1–800–HELP–NOW, or you can get on the Red Cross web page, redcross.org. The Red Cross needs our help. And I urge our fellow citizens to contribute.

The folks on the Gulf Coast are going to need the help of this country for a long time. This is going to be a difficult road. The challenges that we face on the ground are unprecedented. But there's no doubt in my mind we're going to succeed. Right now the days seem awfully dark for those affected. I understand that. But I'm confident that, with time, you can get your life back in order, new communities will flourish, the great city of New Orleans will be back on its feet, and America will be a stronger place for it.

The country stands with you. We'll do all in our power to help you. May God bless you. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 5:11 p.m. in the Rose Garden at the White House.

Remarks Following a Meeting With Former President George Bush and Former President William J. Clinton

September 1, 2005

Relief Efforts for Hurricane Katrina

Good afternoon. Thanks for coming. I'm honored to be with former Presidents Bush and Clinton. Thank you all for being here. We just spent some time talking about the devastation caused by Hurricane Katrina. I brought them up to date on what I know about the latest developments there on the ground. We're united in our sympathy. We're united in our determination to help the good people that have been affected by this hurricane.

I'm in close contact with Secretary Chertoff. He was in the Oval Office earlier today. He's in close contact with FEMA Director Brown.

I want to make sure I fully understand the relief efforts and the extent of the relief efforts and the progress of the relief efforts. After all, we're dealing with one of the largest relief efforts in our Nation's history, and the Federal Government has got an important role to play. Our first priority, of course, is to save lives. There are over 80 FEMA teams that have been deployed to the Gulf Coast

to conduct search and rescue missions. I want to thank those who are working long hours, for their dedication to saving lives. We've got Coast Guard folks and Navy and Army and Air Force and National Guardsmen from many different States that are delivering needed supplies and providing the rescue missions, trying to reach those in danger.

We're working hard to repair the breaches in the levees. Federal, State, and local agencies are also cooperating to sustain life. That means getting food and water to those who are stranded. Medical personnel and local officials are helping hospital patients and people gathered in the Superdome to evacuate. Again, I want to thank the folks in Texas for welcoming those people. Bus caravans are shuttling back and forth between Houston and New Orleans to get those folks to Houston. Law enforcement and National Guardsmen and local leaders are working to restore public order.

Earlier today, General Blum along with Mike Chertoff gave me a briefing about the number of guards-folks trained in police work that will be moving into New Orleans as well as other law enforcement officials from around the area. As we speak, people are moving into the New Orleans area to maintain law and order. I thank them for their good work. Government agencies are working with faith-based and community groups to find shelters for thousands of displaced persons.

And finally, we're moving forward with a comprehensive recovery strategy. We're working hard to restore electric power, repair transportation infrastructure, restart energy production, and of course, strategize as to how to provide housing for these folks.

I met with Chairman Greenspan at lunch as well as the economic team to evaluate the impact of Hurricane Katrina. We particularly spent a lot of time talking about the damage done to our energy infrastructure and its effect on the availability and price of gasoline. In our judgment, we view this storm as a temporary disruption that is being addressed by the Government and by the private sector. We've taken immediate steps to address the issue. The Secretary of Energy is approving loans of crude oil from the Strategic Petroleum Reserve. The EPA has provided a temporary, nationwide waiver for fuel requirements so supplies of gasoline can move more easily within our country and so that we can attract more gasoline from overseas.

We're also working with energy companies to repair and reactivate major refineries and pipelines. The good folks must understand that major refineries have been shut down, which means it's going to be hard to get gasoline to some markets. We're working to help these pipelines get up and running. Pipelines carry refined product.

And so we're working with the majors—major oil companies to get the—with Colonial Pipeline so they can carry the products of the major oil companies, the refined products. Right now the Colonial Pipeline, which is a major pipeline serving the East Coast, is back in operation but only at 50-percent capacity. We anticipate that as the days go by, more and more of that capacity will be restored. Other major pipelines are coming back online. But as I said, we're going to have a temporary disruption of gasoline product.

Another challenge we face is that the downed pipelines are causing the need to transport gasoline to needed markets by ship. Under current law, shipping between American ports can only take place on American ships, and there are currently not enough American ships to move the oil and gasoline to where it's needed. So today I've instructed Secretary of Homeland Security Chairman Chertoff to temporarily waive this requirement, so foreign ships can also help distribute oil and gasoline to where it's needed. Today's action will further help us move gasoline to accommodate the demands of the American citizens.

Steps we're taking will help address the problem of availability, but it's not going to solve it. Americans should be prudent in their use of energy during the course of the next few weeks. Don't buy gas if you don't need it.

This recovery is going to be a long process. It's going to take a lot of hard work and patience and resolve. It's also going to require a lot of money. And the Federal Government will do its part, but the private sector needs to do its part as well. And that's why I've asked Presidents Bush and Clinton to lead

a nationwide fundraising effort to help the victims of Hurricane Katrina.

In the days ahead, the former Presidents will ask Americans to open their hearts and their wallets to help those in need. And they're going to talk to large corporations and small businesses and individual citizens across the Nation. The contributions will benefit the relief organizations that are doing vital work on the ground. We're going to take a look and make sure that the money raised is money needed. Right now if our fellow citizens want to help, they ought to give a cash donation to the Red Cross, which they can find at phone number 1–800–HELP–NOW.

I was so proud of the efforts that President Clinton and President Bush did to help the victims of the tsunami relief. Our country marveled at their capacity to rally our citizens and to work together. And once again, I've asked them to work to help the needs of those who hurt. And once again, I'm confident that the American people will respond.

I know this is an agonizing time, or we all know this is an agonizing time for the people of the Gulf Coast. I ask their continued patience as recovery operations unfold. I can assure them that the thoughts and prayers of the entire Nation are with them and their loved ones. I'm also confident that when it's all said and done, the efforts to rebuild the great city of New Orleans and to rebuild those communities in Mississippi and to help the folks in Alabama will make this Nation a stronger place.

May God bless you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:45 p.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Lt. Gen. H. Steven Blum, Chief, National Guard Bureau.

Memorandum on Assistance to Federal Employees Affected by Hurricane Katrina

September 1, 2005

Memorandum for the Heads of Executive Departments and Agencies

Subject: Assistance to Federal Employees Affected by Hurricane Katrina

I have directed the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) to establish an emergency leave transfer program to assist employees affected by Hurricane Katrina. The emergency leave transfer program will permit employees in an executive agency to donate unused annual leave for transfer to employees of the same or other agencies who have been adversely affected by Hurricane Katrina and who need additional time off from work without having to use their own paid leave.

George W. Bush

Letter to the Speaker of the House of Representatives Transmitting a Supplemental Appropriation for Response and Recovery Efforts in Areas Struck by Hurricane Katrina

September 1, 2005

Dear Mr. Speaker:

As I informed the Nation yesterday, we are dealing with one of the worst natural disasters in our country's history. Residents of the Gulf Coast States affected by the hurricane have lost loved ones, have lost homes, and have been displaced from their communities. My Administration is committed to ensuring that they will have the full support of the Federal Government.

Due to the catastrophic nature of Hurricane Katrina, I am asking the Congress to consider expeditiously the enclosed request, totaling $10.5 billion, for an emergency FY 2005 supplemental appropriation for the Departments of Homeland Security and Defense. These funds will ensure that Federal response and recovery efforts continue uninterrupted.

I hereby designate this proposal in the amount requested herein as an emergency

requirement. This request responds to urgent needs associated with immediate response and recovery efforts associated with Hurricane Katrina in Mississippi, Louisiana, Alabama, and other affected areas.

The enclosed request requires immediate action by the Congress to ensure that the Federal response to this disaster continues uninterrupted. I anticipate making a further request in the coming weeks that will provide for a comprehensive response and recovery effort after fully assessing the impact of the hurricane. The details of this request are set forth in the enclosed letter from the Director of the Office of Management and Budget.

Sincerely,

George W. Bush

Remarks on Departure for a Tour of Gulf Coast Areas Damaged by Hurricane Katrina

September 2, 2005

Secretary Chertoff and I just finished a meeting with Secretary Rumsfeld, General Myers, other members of my Cabinet, as well as General Honore, Admiral Keating, who is in charge of NORTHCOM—General Honore is our active duty general on the ground in Louisiana as well—and Mike Brown, who is the head of FEMA.

There's a lot of aid surging toward those who have been affected, millions of gallons of water, millions of tons of food. We're making progress about pulling people out of the Superdome. There's an issue right now at the convention center of New Orleans that General Honore briefed us on. We're trying to get food and medicine to the convention center. He's working with the Governor and the adjutant general and the mayor to deploy 600 of the newly arrived MPs to secure the site, so that the food and medicine and water can get in there.

A lot of people are working hard to help those who've been affected, and I want to thank the people for their efforts. The results are not acceptable. I'm headed down there right now. I'm looking forward to talking to the people on the ground. I want to assure the people of the affected areas and this country that we'll deploy the assets necessary to get the situation under control, to get the help to the people who've been affected, and that we're beginning long-term planning to help those who have been displaced, as well as long-term planning to help rebuild the communities that have been affected.

I'm looking forward to my trip down there and looking forward to thanking those on the ground and looking forward to assure people that we'll get on top of this situation, and we're going to help people who need help.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:02 a.m. on the South Lawn at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Gov. Kathleen Babineaux Blanco of Louisiana; Lt. Gen. Russel L. Honore, USA, commanding general, First United States Army; Maj. Gen. Bennett C. Landreneau, Adjutant General for Louisiana; and Mayor Ray Nagin of New Orleans, LA.

Remarks on the Aftermath of Hurricane Katrina in Mobile, Alabama

September 2, 2005

The President. Well, first I want to say a few things. I am incredibly proud of our Coast Guard. We have got courageous people risking their lives to save life. And I want to thank the commanders, and I want to thank the troops over there for representing the best of America.

I want to congratulate the Governors for being leaders. You didn't ask for this when you swore in, but you're doing a heck of a job. And the Federal Government's job is big, and it's massive, and we're going to do it. Where it's not working right, we're going to make it right. Where it is working right, we're going to duplicate it elsewhere. We have a responsibility at the Federal level to help save life, and that's the primary focus right now. Every life is precious, and so we're going to spend a lot of time saving lives, whether it be in New Orleans or on the coast of Mississippi.

We have a responsibility to help clean up this mess, and I want to thank the Congress for acting as quickly as you did. Step one is to appropriate $10.5 billion. But I've got to warn everybody, that's just the beginning.

That's a small downpayment for the cost of this effort to help the good folks here rebuild.

We are going to restore order in the city of New Orleans, and we're going to help supplement the efforts of the Mississippi Guard and others to restore order in parts of Mississippi. And I want to thank you for your strong statement of zero tolerance. The people of this country expect there to be law and order, and we're going to work hard to get it. In order to make sure there's less violence, we've got to get food to people. And that's a primary mission, is to get food to people. And there's a lot of food moving. And now the—it's one thing to get it moving to a station; it's the next thing to get it in the hands of the people. And that's where we're going to spend a lot of time focusing.

We've got a lot of rebuilding to do. First, we're going to save lives and stabilize the situation, and then we're going to help these communities rebuild. The good news is—and it's hard for some to see it now—that out of this chaos is going to come a fantastic Gulf Coast, like it was before. Out of the rubbles of Trent Lott's house—he's lost his entire house—there's going to be a fantastic house. And I'm looking forward to sitting on the porch. [*Laughter*]

Governor Bob Riley. He'll be glad to have you.

The President. Out of New Orleans is going to come that great city again. That's what's going to happen. But now we're in the darkest days, and so we got a lot of work to do. And I'm down here to thank people. I'm down here to comfort people. I'm down here to let people know that we're going to work with the States and the local folks with a strategy to get this thing solved.

Now, I also want to say something about the compassion of the people of Alabama and Mississippi and Louisiana and surrounding States. I want to thank you for your compassion. Now is the time to love a neighbor like you'd like to be loved yourself.

Governor Riley announced the fact that they're going to open up homes in military bases for stranded folks. And that's going to be very important and helpful.

My dad and Bill Clinton are going to raise money for Governors' funds. The Governors of Louisiana, Mississippi, and Alabama will have monies available to them to help deal with the long-term consequences of this storm.

The faith-based groups and the community-based groups throughout this part of the world and the country, for that matter, are responding. If you want to help, give cash money to the Red Cross and the Salvation Army. That's where the first help will come. There's going to be plenty of opportunities to help later on, but right now the immediate concern is to save lives and get food and medicine to people so we can stabilize the situation.

Again, I want to thank you all for—and Brownie, you're doing a heck of a job. The FEMA Director is working 24—they're working 24 hours a day.

Again, my attitude is, if it's not going exactly right, we're going to make it go exactly right. If there's problems, we're going to address the problems. And that's what I've come down to assure people of. And again, I want to thank everybody.

And I'm not looking forward to this trip. I got a feel for it when I flew over before. It—for those who have not—trying to conceive what we're talking about, it's as if the entire Gulf Coast were obliterated by a—the worst kind of weapon you can imagine. And now we're going to go try to comfort people in that part of the world.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:35 a.m. at the Mobile Regional Airport. In his remarks, he referred to Gov. Kathleen Babineaux Blanco of Louisiana; Gov. Haley Barbour of Mississippi; and Gov. Bob Riley of Alabama.

Remarks Following a Walking Tour of Areas Damaged by Hurricane Katrina and an Exchange With Reporters in Biloxi, Mississippi

September 2, 2005

The President. I'm proud to be here with the Mayor of Biloxi. The reason I'm proud to be here with him and with the Governor and Senators is because in spite of this terrible tragedy, their spirits are high. It's hard to describe the devastation that we have just walked through. I just talked to a fellow who

was raised in a house that used to be, and he's got rubble surrounding him, and I said, "Are you doing all right?" and he said, "I'm doing fine. I'm alive, and my mother is alive." I talked to a fellow who runs a wrecking service—I think it's a wrecking service. He said, "I witnessed Camille. We went through Camille, and we'll go through this storm, Katrina."

You know, there's a lot of sadness, of course, but there's also a spirit here in Mississippi that is uplifting. I want to thank the Governor for his strong leadership. He set some clear parameters and has followed through on helping calm everybody's nerves. I want to thank the mayor. Neither of them asked for this when they got elected. Now they're called upon to help solve the problem.

And I've come down here, one, to take a look at the damage first hand—and I'm telling you, it's worse than imaginable—and secondly, to tell the good people of this part of the world that the Federal Government is going to help. Our first job is to save life. And earlier today, I had a chance to meet with some chopper drivers, guys dangling off of cables that are pulling people out of harm's way. And I want to thank them for their hard work.

We're going to stabilize the situation, and then get food and medicine and water. I traveled today with the head of the Red Cross and the Salvation Army, and people here are going to see compassion pour in here. There's a lot of folks in America that want to help. If you want to help, give cash to the Salvation Army and the Red Cross. We can ask for other help later on, but right now we need to get food and clothes and medicine to the people. And we'll do so. And one of the main delivery systems will be the armies of compassion.

We're going to clean all this mess up. The Federal Government is going to—will spend money to clean it up. The first downpayment will be signed tonight by me as a result of the good work of the Senate and the House, $10½ billion. But that's just the beginning.

But the people have got to understand that out of this rubble is going to come a new Biloxi, Mississippi. It's hard to envision it right now. When you're standing amidst all that rubble, it's hard to think about a new city. But when you talk to folks that have been through Camille and have seen what happens and you listen to the spirit of people, you realize, Mr. Mayor, that after a lot of hard work, people are going to be—people will be proud of the effort. And I want to thank you for your leadership here. And Haley, I want to thank you for yours.

Again, I want to thank Trent and Thad. They're going to be very important Members of the—they are important Members of the Senate, and they're going to be an important part of this—making sure that we fund this recovery effort.

I'll answer a couple of questions, then I'm going to go.

Aftermath of Hurricane Katrina

Q. Mr. President, were you prepared for the vastness of the destruction?

The President. I don't think anybody can be prepared for the vastness of this destruction. You can look at a picture, but until you sit on that doorstep of a house that used to be or stand by the rubble, you just can't imagine it.

And we took a low—we took a low chopper ride from here—to here, and we're going to take it on over to New Orleans here. And the destruction is unbelievable. And it's destruction on the coast, and it's destruction off the coast. And we've got a lot of work to do.

Terry [Terence Hunt, Associated Press].

Iraq/Hurricane Katrina

Q. One of the things you hear is people saying, "A lot of resources are being devoted to Iraq; now this country needs them." And they're frustrated about that. What do you say to the people who say, "There's too much money being spent on Iraq, and it's time to bring them home?"

The President. I just completely disagree. We've got a job to defend this country in the war on terror, and we've got a job to bring aid and comfort to the people of the Gulf Coast, and we'll do both. We've got plenty of resources to do both.

Somebody questioned me the other day about—do we have enough National Guard troops? Of course we do. These Governors

have got compacts with other States. If they need to call upon another State, the State will send Guard troops. And the people have just got to know, we've got what it takes to do more than one thing, and we'll secure our country from the terrorists, and we'll help rebuild this part of the world.

Recovery Efforts

Q. This morning, when you said the results are "not acceptable," what specifically were you talking about?

The President. Well, I'm talking about the fact that we don't have enough security in New Orleans yet. Results are acceptable here in Mississippi. You know, the results are acceptable in New Orleans when it comes to the hard work of the Coast Guard. But we need to get troops—we had 1,200 troops arrive yesterday, I'm told. We're going to have 1,200 today, 1,200 more. These are troops especially trained for military police work. They need to get in there. They need to stabilize that situation. They need to make sure that the food and medicine that is in place is given to the people that need the food and medicine.

I got a good report today about food and medicine getting to people that weren't getting it, but we'll find out if it's true when we get to New Orleans.

You know, this is a huge task that we're dealing with. And our jobs, as people in positions of responsibility, is not to be satisfied until the job is done as good as it can possibly be done. And that's what I was referring to. I'm certainly not denigrating the efforts of anybody. But the results can be better in New Orleans, and I intend to work with the folks to make it better.

And again, in Mississippi, we've got a different situation. We've got a Guard that is in place, activated. Haley made some clear rules and is following through on them. But the task, in both places, the tasks are enormous. And it's going to take a while. This is—our fellow citizens must understand that we're talking years. Now, we're not talking years to get people rescued; we're talking days. And we're not talking years to get infrastructure back up here. We're talking weeks to get the electricity running.

I got some good news on the pipeline, the Colonial Pipeline. We thought it would be at 47-percent capacity, at least I was briefed that yesterday. I'm told it's going to be significantly more than that, which is good news. It means that one of the problem areas that Haley was talking to me about is how—and the mayor—was how do you get fuel to these communities. And obviously, the more fuel going through pipelines, the more fuel will be available not only here in the affected areas but up and down the Southeast of the country.

And listen, we're going to have a problem this weekend when it comes to gasoline, just like they've got a problem here. But we're addressing it. We're—the EPA suspended rules so that we could use—which attracted—suspended rules for types of gasoline which attracted fuel from overseas. That's good. We're swapping oil out of the SPRO. We're making sure that there's oil to be processed in the refineries. They're working hard to get these ports open.

Trent was telling me that we got to get that port of Pascagoula open so we can get ships of foreign crude oil to the refinery. And we're—we just got a lot of work to do. The good news is we know what we're going to do, and we're going to get it done.

Jennifer [Jennifer Loven, Associated Press].

Q. Sir, you talk about fixing what's wrong and you talk about the results not being acceptable, but there are a lot of people wondering why you weren't fixing the problems yesterday or the day before, and why the richest country on Earth can't get food and water to those people that need it?

The President. The levees broke on Tuesday in New Orleans. On Wednesday, we—and Thursday we started evacuating people. A lot of people have left that city. A lot of people have been pulled out on buses. It's—I am satisfied with the response. I'm not satisfied with all the results. They started pulling people off roofs immediately. They started rallying—we started rallying choppers to get people off rooftops, started saving lives. I mean, thousands of people's lives have been saved immediately, and that's good news.

This is one of the worst storms in our Nation's history. New Orleans got hit by two

storms, one the hurricane and then the flood. And it's going to take a monumental effort to continue moving forward, but we will. And this is a nation that has done a lot of big things before, and this is going to be one of the biggest, which is to recover from one of the worst storms, if not the worst storm. Haley called it the worst; I'm calling it one of the worst storms in the Nation's history.

Yes.

Housing

Q. Mr. President, thank you for coming. We appreciate it very much. There's a need for immediate housing and long-term housing. Many people right now have no shelter, and on top of that, many people do not have flood insurance. They never expected a tidal surge of this magnitude. What can you say about housing efforts?

The President. Well, I appreciate that. The—FEMA will be providing a lot of temporary housing. And that's one of the responsibilities that FEMA assumes, to find shelter for people.

And in terms of the longer term, the Government has got the capacity to make low-interest loans and help businesses get back going. And there will be a—again, once the situation gets stabilized, there will be the appropriate authorities here to start passing out the forms necessary for people to apply for the relief and the help they can get. But the Federal Government will be providing the temporary housing.

Rebuilding New Orleans

Q. Mr. President, I realize the first priority is, obviously, saving lives. But let me ask you about long-term planning in New Orleans. There are some who are starting to say that since we're going to be spending billions in tax dollars to rebuild that great city, that we might want to think about building it in such a way where it's not below sea level again, whether it's somehow moved around or relocated or moved up. What are your thoughts on that?

The President. My thoughts are, we're going to get somebody who knows what they're talking about when it comes to rebuilding cities. I'm going to delegate. I'm going to call upon the best experts, starting with the people in New Orleans, and get opinions as we work with the local folks. We're going to help people rebuild, Stretch [Richard Keil, Bloomberg News]. That's what we're going to do. And we're going to listen to people who know what they're doing.

But my objective now, of course, is to save lives and get people out of New Orleans, and then—and make sure that those who are out of New Orleans and in New Orleans get food and help, just like in Mississippi. Mississippi people have got to understand that I know a lot of the focus is on New Orleans, but I'm thinking about Mississippi as well. I'm not only thinking about coastal Mississippi; I'm thinking about rural Mississippi, places in this part of the State that are remote and don't have electricity. And they just got to know that the Governor talked to me about it, and I listened very carefully about the problems facing these good folks. And one of the things we're going to concentrate on is getting these electric plants up and running and getting the power to the people so that they can have the electricity necessary to live a more normal life.

It's—these are tough times. This is a storm the likes of which, you know, I pray I never see again. It's the like—it's a storm the likes of which the people who have been through Camille, they said, "You know, Camille was terrible. We're never going to see anything like Camille again." Camille was in '69, and a guy said, "You know, we felt safe here in this part of the neighborhood because Camille didn't hit it." And sure enough, we witnessed a storm worse than Camille.

And again, I want to thank all the people that are working hard. You—we've seen line crews; we've seen firefighters from around the country. People around here are going to be amazed at the compassion that pours into this community. First things first, we've got to make them safe.

Mr. Mayor, again, thank you for your hospitality. Thank you for your compassion.

Mayor A.J. Holloway. Thank you, Mr. President.

The President. Governor, thanks for your leadership.

Governor Haley Barbour. Thanks for your help.

The President. Thank you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:15 p.m. In his remarks, he referred to Marsha J. Evans, president and chief executive officer, American Red Cross; and W. Todd Bassett, national commander, Salvation Army.

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.

August 27

In the morning, at the Bush Ranch in Crawford, TX, the President had an intelligence briefing.

The President declared an emergency in Louisiana and ordered Federal aid to supplement State and local response efforts in the parishes located in the path of Hurricane Katrina beginning on August 26 and continuing.

August 28

During the day, the President participated in a video teleconference with representatives of Federal and State emergency management organizations on Hurricane Katrina.

The President declared a major disaster in Florida and ordered Federal aid to supplement State and local recovery efforts in the area struck by Hurricane Katrina beginning on August 24 and continuing.

The President declared an emergency in Mississippi and ordered Federal aid to supplement State and local response efforts in the counties located in the path of Hurricane Katrina beginning on August 27 and continuing.

The President declared an emergency in Alabama and ordered Federal aid to supplement State and local response efforts in the counties located in the direct path of Hurricane Katrina beginning on August 28 and continuing.

August 29

In the morning, the President had an intelligence briefing followed by a briefing by Federal Emergency Management Agency Director Michael D. Brown on Hurricane Katrina. Later, he and Mrs. Bush traveled to Luke Air Force Base, Glendale, AZ. While en route aboard Air Force One, he had a telephone conversation with Director Brown to further discuss Hurricane Katrina and recovery efforts. Upon arrival in Glendale, he met with USA Freedom Corps volunteers Ruben and Rita Carroll.

Later in the morning, the President and Mrs. Bush traveled to El Mirage, AZ. Later, they traveled to Rancho Cucamonga, CA, where, upon arrival in the afternoon, he met with USA Freedom Corps volunteer Joe Graff.

Later in the afternoon, the President and Mrs. Bush traveled to Coronado, CA. Later, he had telephone conversations with Gov. Haley Barbour of Mississippi, Gov. Bob Riley of Alabama, and Gov. Kathleen Babineaux Blanco of Louisiana to discuss Hurricane Katrina.

The President declared a major disaster in Alabama and ordered Federal aid to supplement State and local recovery efforts in the area struck by Hurricane Katrina on August 29 and continuing.

The President declared a major disaster in Louisiana and ordered Federal aid to supplement State and local recovery efforts in the area struck by Hurricane Katrina beginning on August 29 and continuing.

The President declared a major disaster in Mississippi and ordered Federal aid to supplement State and local recovery efforts in the area struck by Hurricane Katrina on August 29 and continuing.

August 30

In the morning, the President had an intelligence briefing followed by a briefing on Hurricane Katrina. Later, he and Mrs. Bush traveled to San Diego, CA.

Later in the morning, the President and Mrs. Bush participated in an interview with Armed Forces Radio and Television Service. Then, at the Naval Medical Center, they met with medical health care providers.

In the afternoon, the President and Mrs. Bush returned to the Bush Ranch in Crawford, TX.

August 31

In the morning, the President had an intelligence briefing followed by a videoconference on Hurricane Katrina and recovery efforts. Later, he returned to Washington, DC, arriving in the afternoon. While en route aboard Air Force One, he viewed areas damaged by Hurricane Katrina.

In the afternoon, in the Cabinet Room, the President had a meeting with the White House Task Force on Hurricane Katrina Recovery.

During the day, the President had a telephone conversation with King Abdullah II of Saudi Arabia.

The President announced his intention to nominate Santanu K. Baruah to be Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Economic Development.

The President announced his intention to nominate Emilio T. Gonzalez to be Director of the Bureau of Citizenship and Immigration Services at the Department of Homeland Security.

The President announced his intention to nominate Jeffrey D. Jarrett to be Assistant Secretary of Energy (Fossil Energy).

The President announced his intention to nominate Ellen R. Sauerbrey to be Assistant Secretary of State (Population, Refugees, and Migration).

The President announced his intention to nominate Alexander R. Vershbow to be Ambassador to South Korea.

The President announced his intention to appoint Kenneth G. Prillaman as Chief Human Capital Officer at the Department of Homeland Security.

The President announced his intention to recess appoint Alice S. Fisher as Assistant Attorney General (Criminal Division) at the Department of Justice.

The President announced his intention to recess appoint Peter Schaumber as a member of the National Labor Relations Board.

September 1

In the morning, the President had a telephone conversation with Petty Officer Josh Mitcheltree of the U.S. Coast Guard to express his appreciation for his efforts and the efforts of his colleagues in response to Hurricane Katrina. He then had a telephone conversation with Federal Emergency Management Agency Director Michael D. Brown to discuss recovery efforts in response to Hurricane Katrina.

Later in the morning, the President participated in an interview with Diane Sawyer of ABC's "Good Morning America." He then had an intelligence briefing. Later, he had a telephone conversation with Prime Minister Paul Martin of Canada, in which the Prime Minister expressed his condolences on the damage and loss of life caused by Hurricane Katrina.

Later in the morning, the President met with Secretary of Defense Donald H. Rumsfeld; Gen. Richard B. Myers, USAF, Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff; Lt. Gen. H. Steven Blum, Chief, National Guard Bureau; and Secretary of Homeland Security Michael Chertoff to discuss operational concerns and the security situation in the areas affected by Hurricane Katrina.

In the afternoon, the President had lunch with Federal Reserve Chairman Alan Greenspan. He then participated in a briefing by his economic team on the economic impact of Hurricane Katrina.

Also in the afternoon, the President met with Lt. Gen. H. Steven Blum, Chief, National Guard Bureau, and Secretary of Homeland Security Michael Chertoff to discuss the security situation in the areas affected by Hurricane Katrina.

The White House announced that the President will welcome Prime Minister Lawrence Gonzi of Malta for a meeting at the White House on October 3.

The White House announced that the President will welcome President Georgi Purvanov of Bulgaria for a meeting at the White House on October 17.

The President announced a nationwide charitable fundraising effort to be led by former Presidents George Bush and William J. Clinton to aid the Gulf Coast victims of Hurricane Katrina.

September 2

In the morning, the President had an intelligence briefing and a briefing on Hurricane Katrina. He then met with Secretary of Homeland Security Michael Chertoff; Secretary of Defense Donald H. Rumsfeld; Federal Emergency Management Agency Director Michael D. Brown; Gen. Richard B. Myers, USAF, Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff; Lt. Gen. Russel L. Honore, USA, commanding general, First United States Army; Adm. Timothy J. Keating, USN, commander, North American Aerospace Defense Command and U.S. Northern Command.

Later in the morning, the President traveled to Mobile, AL, where, upon arrival, he met with Gov. Haley Barbour of Mississippi and Gov. Bob Riley of Alabama. They then took a helicopter tour of the area damaged by Hurricane Katrina.

In the afternoon, the President traveled to Biloxi, MS, where he toured the area damaged by Hurricane Katrina. He then traveled to New Orleans, LA, where, upon arrival, he met with Gov. Kathleen Babineaux Blanco of Louisiana. Later, they took an aerial tour of New Orleans.

The White House announced that the President will welcome President Vladimir Putin of Russia to the White House on September 16.

The President verbally declared an emergency in Arkansas and ordered Federal aid to supplement State and local response efforts to assist evacuees from and to provide emergency assistance to those areas struck by Hurricane Katrina beginning on August 29 and continuing.

The President verbally declared an emergency in Texas and ordered Federal aid to supplement State and local response efforts to assist evacuees from and to provide emergency assistance to those areas struck by Hurricane Katrina beginning on August 29 and continuing.

Nominations Submitted to the Senate

NOTE: No nominations were submitted to the Senate during the period covered by this issue.

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 August 27

Statement by the Press Secretary on disaster assistance to Louisiana

Released August 28

Statement by the Press Secretary on disaster assistance to Florida

Statement by the Press Secretary on disaster assistance to Mississippi

Statement by the Press Secretary on disaster assistance to Alabama

Statement by the Press Secretary on disaster assistance to Louisiana

Released August 29

Transcript of a press gaggle by Press Secretary Scott McClellan

Transcript of a teleconference briefing by HHS Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services Administrator Mark B. McClellan

Statement by the Press Secretary on disaster assistance to Alabama

Statement by the Press Secretary on disaster assistance to Louisiana

Statement by the Press Secretary on disaster assistance to Mississippi

Fact sheet: New Medicare Prescription Drug Benefit To Include Low-Cost Options

Released August 30

Transcript of a press gaggle by Press Secretary Scott McClellan

Released August 31

Transcript of a press gaggle by Press Secretary Scott McClellan

Fact sheet: Federal Relief for the Victims of Hurricane Katrina

Released September 1

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Scott McClellan

Transcript of a teleconference briefing by Office of Management and Budget Director Joshua B. Bolton on Federal response efforts to Hurricane Katrina

Statement by the Press Secretary: Visit of Prime Minister Lawrence Gonzi of Malta

Statement by the Press Secretary: Visit of President Georgi Purvanov of Bulgaria

Released September 2

Statement by the Press Secretary announcing that the President signed H.R. 3645

Statement by the Press Secretary: Visit of President Vladimir Putin of Russia

Statement by the Press Secretary announcing the President's verbal declaration of disaster assistance to Arkansas

Statement by the Press Secretary announcing the President's verbal declaration of disaster assistance to Texas

Acts Approved by the President

Approved August 8 *

H.R. 6 / Public Law 109–58
Energy Policy Act of 2005

Approved August 10 *

H.R. 3 / Public Law 109–59
Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users

Approved August 11 *

H.R. 1132 / Public Law 109–60
National All Schedules Prescription Electronic Reporting Act of 2005

* These Public Laws were not received in time for inclusion in the appropriate issue.