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Mr. Jones. There's a big difference.

The President. Yes, there is. Anyway, thank you all for coming.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:11 a.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to TV host and fisherman Charlie Pack.

Remarks Following Discussions With King Hamad bin Isa al-Khalifa of Bahrain

March 25, 2008

President Bush. Your Majesty, welcome back to Washington. It is such a pleasure to see you. I still have such fond memories of our trip to the Kingdom of Bahrain. His Majesty and I were reminiscing about the sword dance that you put on. It was spectacular. And you've got a—not only do you have a beautiful country, but you've got a prosperous country and a country that is a great friend of the United States. It's just such a honor to welcome you back here.

We had a good discussion—and we'll continue our discussion over lunch—on a variety of subjects. First, I do want to thank the Kingdom for sending an ambassador to Iraq. That's a very strong move that indicates a willingness to lead, as well as a willingness to send a signal that when a young democracy like Iraq is beginning to make progress, that it is important for the neighborhood to recognize that progress. And I really do want to thank Your Majesty for that.

We talked about security measures, the need to work together on joint security operations. I congratulated His Majesty on Bahrain's leadership of a joint task force that's—that is enabling nations to learn how to work together in order to keep the peace.

All in all, it's been what you would expect: a visit that's cordial and comfortable and amongst friends. And so, Your Majesty, welcome back, and thank you for coming.

King Hamad. Thank you. Thank you. I would like to thank the President for his kind invitation and his great support to Bahrain and to the stability and prosperity of our region.

And concerning sending back ambassador—an ambassador to Iraq, Iraq is an Arab state. Iraq is a founder of the Arab League, so it deserves all the support that it can get from other brother Arabs.

And the discussion today focused on bilateral relations concerning the free trade agreement, which we have signed, and concerning the energy as well, which yesterday was signed by the Secretary of State and our Foreign Minister. And we talked about security matters, which really are the most important issue for maintaining the development and the prosperity in our region.

And I came all the way to thank the President for what he has done for Bahrain and for our region and for the whole world—stability and security in fighting terrorism and extremism. And we hope we achieve our common goals by having a stable world.

So thank you, Mr. President. Thank you.

President Bush. Thank you, Majesty. Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:32 a.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. King Hamad referred to Minister of Foreign Affairs Khalid bin Ahmad al-Khalifa of Bahrain.

Remarks at a Celebration of Greek Independence Day

March 25, 2008

Thank you. Your Eminence, thank you very much. Welcome to the White House. I'm always open for a few suggestions. [*Laughter*] You're an easy man to listen to.

And I want to thank you all for coming. Here we are to celebrate the 187th anniversary of Greek independence. And it's an interesting place to celebrate it, isn't it? You know, the White House is a great symbol for independence and freedom and liberty. And it's a fitting place to celebrate the independence of Greece.

Mr. Minister, thank you for coming. We appreciate you coming all the way over for this event, and we're proud you're here. And thanks for bringing your son.

Mr. Ambassador, thanks for coming. Ambassador Mallias is with us today. Mr. Ambassador—there you are, right there, Ambassador. Thank you. It's good to see your wife. Appreciate you all being here. Ambassador

Kakouris of—to Cyprus is with us—from Cyprus to U.S. is with us.

Senator, thank you for coming. It's good to see you again. We miss you around these parts. [*Laughter*] I don't know if you've missed these parts, but we miss you around these parts. [*Laughter*]

Father Alex, good to see you again, sir. Thanks. I appreciate very much my Greek American—fellow Greek American citizens coming, as well as those who wear the uniform. We're proud to be in your presence.

Your Eminence, all free people stand on the shoulders of Greece. In the ancient world where political power usually came from the sword, the people of Athens came together around a radical and untried idea: that men were fit to govern themselves. It was this freedom that allowed them to create one of the most vibrant societies in history. And that society deeply influenced America's Founding Fathers when they sought to establish a free state centuries later.

Throughout their history, the people of Greece have been committed to liberty. They've also been committed to the important principle that liberty only survives when brave men and women are ready to come to its defense.

In the years leading up to Greece's war for independence, one of the rallying cries of the Greek people was that it was better to be free for an hour than to be a slave for 40 years. Those are the kind of folks who had their priorities straight.

The United States was by Greece's side from the very beginning of the struggle for independence. In those early days, some Americans volunteered to serve in the Greek army, and many more contributed the funds that were necessary to keep the fight alive. Former Presidents John Adams and Thomas Jefferson and James Madison all spoke in favor of the Greek people's right to self-determination. And after many long years, Greece emerged victorious and free. And that's what we're celebrating today.

And from that time forward, the United States and Greece have been strong allies in the cause of freedom. Today, we continue to work to spread the hope of liberty. Our countries are working together in Afghanistan, where Greek troops are an important part of the NATO forces that are restoring hope to that country. We're also partners in promoting stability in the Balkans and in the Middle East, where Greece provides peacekeepers in Bosnia and Kosovo and Lebanon. Please thank your Governments for this—strong signals that liberty is universal and that liberty will bring the peace we all hope.

Our Nation has been inspired by Greek ideals, and we have been enriched by Greek immigrants. Today, more than 1.3 million Americans trace their ancestry back to Greece, and we're better for having them here. America is a richer place, a better place.

Our two countries also share ties of faith. The Greek Orthodox Church has well over 1 million members in the United States. Under the leadership of this fine man, the Church is a source of strength and inspiration for a lot of our citizens. It's a proud part of our country's tradition of religious diversity and religious tolerance.

For nearly two centuries, the bonds between the United States and Greece have continued to strengthen. And during the earliest days of our friendship, one Greek leader told the American people, quote: "It is in your land that liberty has fixed her abode. In imitating you, we shall imitate our ancestors."

Today, I know that both our countries are making these ancestors proud through our commitment to freedom. And I'm confident that this tradition of friendship between the United States and Greece will continue for many years to come.

And so I ask God's blessings on the people of Greece and the people of America. And now welcome the Metropolitan Youth Choir of the Archdiocese.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:41 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Archbishop Demetrios, Primate of the Greek Orthodox Church in America, who spoke prior to the President; Minister of Development Christos Folias of Greece; Greece's Ambassador to the U.S. Alexandros P. Mallias and his wife, Francoise-Anne Mallias; Cyprus's Ambassador to the U.S. Andreas S. Kakouris; and Reverend Father Alex Karloutsos, assistant to the Archbishop for public affairs.

Remarks Following a Visit to ColorCraft of Virginia in Sterling, Virginia

March 26, 2008

The President. Jim, thank you very much for your hospitality.

James H. Mayes. Thank you, sir.

The President. Thank you all very much for greeting me here.

ColorCraft is a small, thriving business that will benefit from the stimulus package that the Congress passed earlier this year. And it will benefit from it because if they make—if Jim decides to purchase software or machinery, there is a tax incentive to encourage him to do so. He's made the decision to do so, and his company will be encouraged to do so through the Tax Code.

And that's important because when he buys a machine or when he buys software, somebody has to manufacture that. And therefore, there is a direct link between the stimulus package and jobs. As well—and we talked about this earlier—a lot of the folks who work here at ColorCraft are going to get a check in the second week of May as part of the economic, progrowth stimulus package. And recently, there's been a mailer out to our citizens from the IRS. And this mailer basically describes the benefits from the stimulus package that people will receive.

One of the things that's very important for our citizenry to understand—that is, if you do not file an income tax return, you need to go to your local IRS office and get a form that will show the Government where you live and who you are, so you can get your check. If you file an income tax form, all you got to do is in your '07 income tax, you know, mail it in.

But there's a lot of people eligible for this stimulus package—for the money coming out of the Government to our individual citizens—who don't file income tax forms, and yet they're eligible. And so recently, the IRS has been indicating that this weekend, this Saturday, there's going to be a—there's an opportunity for citizens to go and make it clear who you are, where you live, so you can get your check as well.

The purpose of this is to respond decisively to the economic downturn that we're going through. The Congress, along with the White House, worked very closely to pass a very substantial progrowth package. And I fully recognize that people are concerned about our economy, but they must understand that this package has yet to fully kick in yet. We've taken action, but it's going to take a while for the economy to feel the effects of this good law that I signed. It's going to take a while for these folks standing behind me to get their money.

Now, Jim has already made a decision because the aspects of the stimulus package for small businesses are clear. It is the law. And therefore, when he buys the equipment and software that he's planning on buying, he can rest assured that their tax incentive will be available for him in this year.

Now, small businesses are the backbone of the U.S. economy. Small-business owners and—are dreamers and doers. We want to watch them and help them expand because if they expand, more and more people find work. [*Inaudible*]—a rough patch right now in our economy, but I'm confident in the long term we'll come out stronger than ever before. One of the most decisive actions a government can take is to give people their money back so they can spend it, and that's exactly what we've done. In the second week of May, a lot of folks are going to be getting a sizable check. And I'm looking forward to that day, and I know they are as well.

Mr. Mayes. Yes, sir.

The President. Thank you for coming.

Mr. Mayes. Thank you.

The President. Yes.

Mr. Mayes. Thank you.

The President. Appreciate you having me. Thank you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:25 p.m. In his remarks, he referred to James H. Mayes, president, ColorCraft of Virginia.

Interview With Foreign Print Journalists

March 26, 2008

The President. All right, sit down. How is everybody doing back there? That's what we call the peanut gallery.