

The President. I don't know why. You need to ask those who used the words they used. As I say, it's not the first time it's ever happened, as I think I answered that to Jim there. It's happened throughout our history. And I would hope that, frankly, for the sake of the system itself, that if people disagree with the President-elect Obama, they treat him with respect. I worry about people looking at our system and saying, "Why would I want to go up there and work in that kind of environment?"

And so I wish him all the best. And no question, he'll be—there will be critics. And there should be. We all should welcome criticism on different policy; it's the great thing about our democracy; people have a chance to express themselves. I just hope the tone is respectful. He deserves it, and so does the country.

It has been an honor to work with you. I meant what I said when I first got up here. I wish you all the very best. I wish you and your families all the best. God bless you.

NOTE: The President's news conference began at 9:17 a.m. in the James S. Brady Press Briefing Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to former Presidents Jimmy Carter, George H.W. Bush, and William J. Clinton; Prime Minister Salam Fayyad of the Palestinian Authority; and Michelle Obama, wife, and Malia and Natasha "Sasha" Obama, daughters, of President-elect Barack Obama.

**Message to the Congress
Transmitting a Report on Treasury
Department Plans Concerning
Emergency Economic Stabilization**

January 12, 2009

To the Congress of the United States:

Consistent with section 115(a)(3) of the Emergency Economic Stabilization Act of 2008 (Public Law 110-343) (the "Act"), I hereby transmit a report detailing the plan of the Secretary of the Treasury to exercise the authority under the Act.

George W. Bush

The White House,
January 12, 2009.

Remarks Following a Cabinet Meeting

January 13, 2009

I want to thank an extraordinary group of American citizens who have served our country as members of my Cabinet. Everybody around this table here could have taken the easy road and stayed home and worried about their own comforts, but instead they answered the call to service. And the country is lucky to have folks like this step up and serve.

I have thanked them here at my last Cabinet meeting not only for their service but for helping President-elect Obama transition. And we wish the President-elect and his team all the very best. It is our genuine wish that they do well.

We also reviewed our record, and this administration has had a good, solid record. And I'm very proud of it. I tell people I leave town with a great sense of accomplishment and my head held high. We reformed education, and test scores for minority students are up. We reformed Medicare, and seniors have now got prescription drug coverage. We lowered taxes for everybody who pays taxes. We transformed our military to make it be able to deal more effectively with the threats of the 21st century. And the Secretary transformed the State Department so it can deal with the threats of the 21st century as well.

We changed how we deliver aid around the world to—through the Millennium Challenge Account. I put good judges on the bench. Drug use for teenagers is down in America by about 25 percent. The air is cleaner. The water is purer. The armies of compassion are more invigorated than ever before. Free trade agreements have been signed.

We dealt with an economic meltdown with strong action so that our successor has a better chance of dealing with the economic fall-out from the credit crisis.

Most of all, we protected this country from harm. And we did so by providing tools and—for our professionals as well as asking our military to do hard work, which they have done time and time again. Concurrent with that, we've promoted the freedom agenda.

Fifty million people are now free in Afghanistan and Iraq because of action taken by the United States and our coalition.

But when I talk about the freedom agenda, I talk about more than just freedom from tyranny. I talk about freedom from hunger—and we've had a substantial aid program to help people who are hungry—and freedom from disease. I'm very proud of the efforts out of the State Department to—on PEPFAR, which is the AIDS initiative on the continent of Africa, as well as our malaria initiative.

All in all, this administration has relied upon the great compassion of the American people, the sacrifice of those who wear the uniform. And so we leave town honored to have served and proud of the job we have done. Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:14 a.m. in the Cabinet Room at the White House. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of these remarks.

Remarks Following a Meeting With President Felipe de Jesus Calderon Hinojosa of Mexico

January 13, 2009

President Bush. *Bienvenido a mi amigo.* Mr. President, welcome.

President Calderon. Thank you.

President Bush. It has been a true pleasure to work with President Calderon. He's a man of conviction, he is a man of principle, and he is a man who's willing to take on tough challenges. I have appreciated every meeting I've had with him.

I want to take—talk about two subjects quickly. One, Americans are concerned about the battle that's taking place in Mexico, and I want our fellow citizens to understand that this man understands the responsibilities of government to provide security; that he will not allow his country, or parts of his country, to be taken over by narcotraffickers; and that the United States of America wants to share and help deal with the issue on both sides of the border. The less drugs we use, the less pressure there will be in Mexico. We have got responsibilities to help prevent guns

from going from the United States into Mexico.

And so, Mr. President, you and I have laid the foundation for a constructive, mutual engagement on this issue.

And secondly, I want to thank you for your steadfast support of trade. I'm a big, strong believer in NAFTA. NAFTA has been good for the United States of America, and NAFTA has been good for Mexico. And I want to thank you for that.

And so, Mr. President, it has been a pleasure to work with you. Thank you for your friendship.

President Calderon. Thank you.

President Bush. Yes. *Y hora en el español.*

President Calderon. *Como no.*

[At this point, President Calderon made remarks in Spanish. He then spoke in English, as follows.]

President Calderon. We have a strong commitment in order to fight and defeat the criminals in Mexico, and we will do so. And we have a strong commitment with the rule of law, enforcement of the law in our country.

[President Calderon continued in Spanish. He then concluded in English, as follows.]

President Calderon. Thank you, President Bush—

President Bush. Yes, sir.

President Calderon. —and good luck in the future.

President Bush. Thank you, sir. Thank you.

White House Staff Member. Okay, guys, thank you—

President Bush. Hold on. *Un momento, un momento.*

President Calderon. Wait. Hold on.

[An interpreter then provided the translation of President Calderon's previously delivered remarks.]

Interpreter. Good afternoon, friends. I wanted to say that I came here to Washington, DC, to wish President Bush the very best. I want to wish him and his family all the best in this new phase. And I want to thank him especially for the friendship that he has shown me over the last 2 years in facing our common challenges together—