

I'm honored you all are here. Congratulations on your elections. We look forward to working with you, and God bless.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:09 p.m. in the State Dining Room at the White House. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

### **Remarks at the Swearing-In Ceremony for Donald H. Rumsfeld as Secretary of Defense**

*January 26, 2001*

It's a great honor to welcome Secretary Rumsfeld and his wife and family here to the Oval Office. Thank you all for coming.

In swearing in Don Rumsfeld, we have just sworn in a leader of exceptional strength and ability and vision. And I'm grateful that he has returned to service to our country.

Don and I have set three clear goals to guide American defense policy. First, we will strengthen the bond of trust between the American people and those who wear our Nation's uniform. We'll give them the tools they need and the respect they deserve.

Second, we will work to defend our people and our allies against growing threats: the threats of missiles; information warfare; the threats of biological, chemical, and nuclear weapons. We will confront the new threats of a new century.

Third, we will begin creating the military of the future, one that takes full advantage of revolutionary new technologies. We will promote the peace by redefining the way wars will be fought. These are great and exciting objectives, and our new Secretary of Defense is uniquely qualified to accomplish them.

As a former Navy pilot, Don Rumsfeld understands that if we ever send our forces into harm's way, we must send them fully prepared and equipped for the dangers they face. As a highly successful businessman, he understands that we must modernize and transform the business of defense, getting the value for our taxpayers' money. He is willing to challenge the status quo inside the Pentagon.

As the head of the National Commission on Ballistic Missile Threats, he is the among

the country's most informed experts on this vital issue. As a former Congressman, he understands the need to work closely with the Congress. As a former White House Chief of Staff, as a former Secretary of Defense, he understands what it takes to be a leader.

This is an exceptional history of service, and Don Rumsfeld is an exceptional man with integrity and honesty as a cornerstone of his foundation.

Mr. Secretary, congratulations.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:23 p.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Joyce Rumsfeld, wife of Secretary Rumsfeld. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of Secretary Rumsfeld.

### **Remarks Following a Meeting With Governors and an Exchange With Reporters**

*January 26, 2001*

#### **Legislative Agenda on Education**

**The President.** Let me—first of all, I want to thank my Governor friends for coming. From all around the country, people came—from Idaho, from the South. The head of the National Governors is here, and of course, the soon-to-be-head of the National Governors. I'm honored you all came. It's good to see you in a new setting—for me, at least. And we had a long discussion about education.

These Governors made education their number one priority in their State, and obviously they're keenly aware of the role of Federal Government. And we've had a really good discussion about how to make their jobs easier. And their job is to make sure every child gets educated, which is the noblest of all calling in America.

So I appreciate your coming. It's always good to be talking to people who know what they're talking about. And when it comes to public education, Governors really understand the subject. So I'm grateful you're here.

I'll be glad to answer a few questions.

#### **Vandalism**

**Q.** Mr. President, are you offended, sir, by the reports of vandal—acts of vandalism

by outgoing members of the Clinton administration?

**The President.** I'm so happy to be here—[*laughter*]*—that I'm looking forward. There might have been a prank or two; maybe somebody put a cartoon on the wall—that's okay. It's time now to move forward. It's time to focus our attention on what's possible and how to get children educated. I'm excited about what this week has brought. I'm excited about my job.*

### **Stem Cell Research**

**Q.** Mr. President, do you believe that Federal money should be used or spent on fetal tissue or stem cell research derived from induced abortions?

**The President.** No, I don't.

**Q.** Will you have an Executive order to that effect?

**The President.** I believe there's some exciting—I believe there's some wonderful opportunities for adult stem cell research. I believe we can find stem cells from fetuses that died a natural death. But I do not support research from aborted fetuses.

**Q.** I assume that you'll sign an Executive order to that or make that the law of the land?

**The President.** I'll let you know when I decide all policy decisions. But I do not—to answer your question, the answer is no.

### **Russia-U.S. Relations**

**Q.** Mr. President, have you responded to President Putin's letter? And do you plan to review Russian relations with the United States before you go forward in any arms control talks?

**The President.** I have not responded to the letter yet. I will, of course. I read about it—I might have even read about it before it hit Washington. [*Laughter*]

What was the second half of your question?

### **Arms Control Talks**

**Q.** Do you plan to review the U.S. relations with the Russians before you start up on arms control talks?

**The President.** Well, you may remember in the campaign I talked about two aspects about arms. One was that I am going to go

forward with, along with Secretary Rumsfeld, about plans for a missile defense system. But I also said that I think it's important for us, commensurate with our ability to keep the peace, to reduce our nuclear arsenal on our own. And I'm going to fulfill that campaign promise.

That may—we'll see how that affects possible arms talks. My point is, is that I want America to lead the nation—lead the world toward a more safe world when it comes to nuclear weaponry. On the offensive side, we can do so. And we can do so on the defensive side, as well.

### **First Week in Office**

**Q.** Mr. President, it's the end of your first week.

**Assistant Press Secretary Gordon Johndroe.** Thank you. Lights.

**The President.** Wait a minute, this may be this—[*laughter*]*—end of my first week? Yes.*

**Q.** It's the end of your first week. How do you think it's going? How are you settling in? And were there any surprises?

**The President.** Oh, let's see. Well, first of all, it's been a great week. I'm excited about my job. I really appreciate—I guess the biggest, most pleasant surprise, if you'd call it that, was how receptive Members of Congress are to come here to the White House to talk about how we can work together. I really appreciate both Republicans and Democrats coming. I think we've met with 90 Members of Congress here in the first week. And I think, to a person, that they're interested in figuring out if we can't exceed the expectations that now exist around the country that nothing is going to get done.

I'm honored to be here, and I'm looking forward to welcoming former President Bush back to his old residence. He's just not going to be sleeping in the master suite this time around. [*Laughter*]

**Q.** When's he coming? When's he coming?

**The President.** He's coming today.

**Q.** How about settling in on a personal basis, on your personal life? Are you settling in—

**The President.** My personal life, we're great. The dogs—the best news is, the dogs

seem to have adjusted. The cat that was howling on the first night is now more comfortable with her territory, and so she's sleeping through the night.

My wife is going to make a great First Lady. She is just as comfortable as she can be with people, no matter if they're with a fancy title, or not.

And the White House staff is just remarkably generous people. And we're settling in. And it's a huge honor to live in the people's house. And I understand the honor. And I'm going to uphold the honor.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3 p.m. in the Roosevelt Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Gov. Parris N. Glendening of Maryland, outgoing chair, and Gov. John Engler of Michigan, incoming chair, National Governors' Association. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

### **Statement on the Earthquake in India**

*January 26, 2001*

I am saddened by the news of the tragic earthquake centered in India's Gujarat state this morning. I extend my condolences and those of the American people to the families of the many victims in the cities and villages of Gujarat and elsewhere. Earthquakes know no political boundaries: I send condolences to the people affected in neighboring Pakistan as well. We stand ready to assist as needed and as desired by the Governments.

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### **Digest of Other White House Announcements**

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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.

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#### **January 20**

In the evening, the President and Laura Bush attended several Inaugural balls.

#### **January 22**

In the evening, the President met with Speaker of the House of Representatives J. Dennis Hastert.

The White House announced that the President will travel to San Cristobal, Mexico, on February 16.

#### **January 23**

In the morning, the President had separate telephone conversations with President Vicente Fox of Mexico and Prime Minister Tony Blair of the United Kingdom.

In the afternoon, the President met with Mayor Anthony A. Williams of Washington, DC.

#### **January 24**

In the morning, the President had separate telephone conversations with King Fahd and Crown Prince Abdullah of Saudi Arabia, President Hosni Mubarak of Egypt, and King Abdullah II of Jordan.

In the evening, the President met with Senator John McCain.

Later, the President had separate telephone conversations with President Kim Dae-jung of South Korea and President Aleksander Kwasniewski of Poland.

#### **January 25**

In the evening, the President had a telephone conversation with Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder of Germany.

Later, the President and Laura Bush traveled to Hyattsville, MD, where they met with Catholic leaders at the residence of Archbishop Theodore E. McCarrick of the Archdiocese of Washington, DC, after which they returned to Washington, DC.

The White House announced that the President invited Prime Minister Jean Chretien of Canada to the White House on February 5.

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### **Nominations Submitted to the Senate**

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

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