

and illiteracy that limit the ambitions of so many children in our hemisphere and feed their frustrations.

We will work with our neighbors to find ways to give all our children quality schools, because learning and literacy are the foundations for development and democracy.

We must make new efforts to confront the problem of illegal drugs. Our country is committed to reducing the demand for drugs at home, and we must help other countries fight the supply of drugs at their source.

And we must renew our commitment to free trade. The people of Canada, Mexico, and the United States have benefited greatly from the North American Free Trade Agreement. NAFTA has created good jobs in all three nations. Now we must extend those opportunities to all with a free trade agreement for the entire Western Hemisphere. This will be good for American workers from farmers and ranchers to high-tech entrepreneurs. It will also be good for the poor in other countries, increasing their wages and opportunities. This is an agenda that stretches far beyond our borders.

But when I return to Washington tomorrow the most pressing business concern, some long overdue reforms here in our own country. Early next week my plan to reform our public schools is expected to come up for debate in the Senate. It is the best chance we have had for meaningful education reform in a generation, and we must not waste it.

Education reform must be a bipartisan effort. I have reached out to Members of Congress in both parties and we have achieved a broad consensus on major reforms. Yet the goal here is not just to pass legislation; it is to pass meaningful legislation. And some principles cannot be compromised. The final bill must have strong accountability for our schools, accountability developed by States and local jurisdictions. And for parents with children in failing schools, we must offer options. No parent should be left powerless and no child left helpless in a system that is not doing the job it is supposed to do.

There is a lot going on in Washington and the world—a summit, a tax relief debate, major education reform. But few things are as important as giving all our children the

tools of learning. I hope you will support my education reform plan. And I hope you encourage your Senators to do the same.

Thank you for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 9:15 a.m. on April 20 in the Cabinet Room at the White House for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on April 21. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on April 20 but was embargoed for release until the broadcast.

### Remarks Prior to Discussions With President Vicente Fox of Mexico and an Exchange With Reporters in Quebec

April 21, 2001

**President Bush.** It's an honor for me to be with my friend, a friend of the United States, President Fox. He's a strong advocate of trade, and he's a strong advocate of good relations. Today I've decided that the first state dinner I will have as President of the United States will be with my friend Vicente Fox. We will have the state dinner in early fall, hopefully the month of September, depending upon our schedules. I look forward to a continued dialog on a lot of issues that concern our countries, a lot of issues that concern our hemisphere, prior to the dinner. And of course, we look forward to welcoming you, sir, to Washington on that day.

**President Fox.** Yes, sir. Well, on my side, just to say that, again, we meet, and we meet always to keep the programs going, to keep the followup on the issues that we have been discussing, and I can say that we're working with speed, that we're moving ahead, and that issues like water that we—

**President Bush.** Yes.

**President Fox.** —have created back in San Cristobal, Mexico, is running along and the same—other issues, like migration, like the rest—excellent. And right now, here in this meeting in Quebec, the main concern, I think, is, to all of us is, how do we move with sufficient speed ahead on the trade agreement of the Americas which, as we had the opportunity to see today, everybody is in favor of it, and now our common responsibility, joint responsibility, is to structure a solid, solid project so that it's going to be

to the benefit of everybody, a win-win proposal.

I really appreciate the commitment and the enthusiasm that President Bush showed on his presentations today. I think that's what we need in Latin America, that kind of support, that kind of push, that kind of dynamism that Latin America will take with our partner—in this case, the United States.

#### **Missionary Aircraft Incident in Peru**

**Q.** Mr. President, the United States had a surveillance aircraft tracking the missionary plane over Peru. Does the United States share any responsibility for it being shot down as a suspected drug plane?

**President Bush.** The United States is certainly upset by the fact that a citizen—two citizens lost their lives in Peru. Our hearts go out to the families, the community affected by the loss. I will wait to see all the facts before I reach any conclusions about blame. But right now, we mourn for the loss of a life—two lives. And I'm—

#### **Labor and Environment Protections in Trade Agreements**

**Q.** In your speech today, you mentioned labor and environmental standards. Were you signaling that this will have to be part of future trade deals?

**President Bush.** I understand there's a lot of discussion about labor codicils and environmental codicils. What I was signaling is that we should not allow those codicils to destroy the spirit of free trade. In other words, a free trade agreement focuses on commerce, and that while I understand that some unionists are interested in making sure there's labor protections, I don't want those labor protections to be used to destroy the free trade agreement.

Secondly, it's very important for folks to understand that when there's more trade, there's more commerce, and there's more prosperity. And a prosperous society is more likely to be just. And a prosperous society is one more likely to have good environmental standards and be able to enforce those standards.

So I happen to think trade and clean air and trade and labor conditions—good labor conditions—go hand in hand. It's the poor

nations that have trouble dealing with labor conditions. It's the poor nations that have trouble meeting their obligations to environmental quality. And I firmly believe, like my friend the President believes, that commerce and trade go hand in hand, which will yield a more prosperous society all throughout the hemisphere.

Thank you all very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:41 p.m. in the Club Executive Room at the Hilton Quebec. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

#### **Statement on Earth Day**

*April 21, 2001*

On April 22 each year for more than three decades, Americans have paused on Earth Day to celebrate the rich blessings of our Nation's natural resources and to take stock of our stewardship of nature's gifts. Each of us understands that our prosperity as a Nation will mean little if our legacy to future generations is a world of polluted air, toxic waste, and vanished forests.

During the past 31 years, we have made progress on protecting our environment. America is truly blessed with a vibrant and flourishing environment. But with blessings come responsibility. There is much more to do. As we celebrate Earth Day on this April 22, 2001, I encourage Americans to join me in renewing our commitment to protecting the environment and leaving our children and grandchildren with a legacy of clean water, clean air, and natural beauty.

#### **The President's News Conference With Summit of the Americas Leaders in Quebec**

*April 22, 2001*

[Prime Minister Jean Chretien of Canada opened the news conference with brief remarks in French and continued in English. No translation of his remarks in French was provided.]

**Prime Minister Chretien.** We will start with the President of the United States.