

Week Ending Friday, June 22, 2001

The President's Radio Address

June 16, 2001

The First Lady. Good morning. This weekend millions of Americans will celebrate Father's Day. On this day sons and daughters pause to reflect on all the ways in which our fathers and grandfathers contribute to our lives, with ball games and Band-Aids, advice and sacrifice, patience and strength. Words fall short when we attempt to describe the full extent of our love and appreciation for them, when we try to express our gratitude for everything they do for us.

The fortunate among us know that we can always rely on a dad or a granddad. Sadly, there are those whose lives aren't touched by the loving hand of a father. I hope they, too, find a way to observe this day with a caring role model or other family members.

I am blessed to have many fond memories of my father. I remember fun trips together when I was a child, bumping along the dusty roads of west Texas in our car, heading for El Paso, where my grandmother lived.

My dad once said that when my mother brought him home to meet her parents for the first time, my grandmother was laying brick when they arrived. My dad thought he had married into a family whose women could do anything, and he made me believe that I could be anything.

Whether our fathers live one room away, a plane flight away, or years away in the twilight of our memories, we remember them as we commemorate Father's Day. It's a day to acknowledge all the spoken words and unspoken kindnesses that fathers and grandfathers have shown us through the years.

So thank you for your strength, your love, and your support for your children. Happy Father's Day to all of you. And I want to wish a happy Father's Day to the father of my children. Happy Father's Day, Mr. President.

The President. Thank you, Laura.

Many Americans believe that their father is the finest man they have ever known. That's certainly true in my case. My dad provided me with life's greatest gift, unconditional love. And he still makes sure all his children know how much he loves us.

Fathers are so important in the lives of children: They provide love and encouragement; they are the object of a young child's admiration; and they provide their sons and daughters with an example of what it means to be a good man. When fathers are absent, children are often lost to a world of hopelessness and hardship. Our laws should promote responsible fatherhood.

And so our administration strongly supports community-based fatherhood programs. We are taking steps to make adoption more affordable. And for innocent children who are born into fractured families, we provide support for mentoring programs.

Ultimately, fatherhood is a deeply personal calling. Our own children are given to our care, and they depend on our love. Every parent knows that raising a child is among the most hopeful and affirming experiences a human being will ever know.

So many of my generation had the same experience I did. When we held our children for the first time, we found ourselves. We found a world of duty and love that changed our lives. And since that day, "Dad" has been the most important title I have ever held or will ever hold.

Laura and I wish all the fathers listening a happy Father's Day. So many of you provide to your children daily care and guidance, nurture and protection, discipline and love, and it's making a world of difference. On behalf of them, we want to express our appreciation.

Thank you for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 3:30 p.m. on June 11 in the Cabinet Room at the White House for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on June 16. The transcript was made available by the Office of the

Press Secretary on June 15 but was embargoed for release until the broadcast. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of this address.

Remarks Prior to Discussions With Prime Minister Janez Drnovsek of Slovenia in Kranj, Slovenia

June 16, 2001

The President. [*Inaudible*]*—*the Prime Minister came to Austin to visit me when I was the Governor of Texas, along with then-Ambassador, now the Foreign Minister. We had a wonderful visit then, and I'm looking forward to a great exchange now. We had a good visit in the car coming here. And I'm so grateful for his hospitality to this most spectacular and beautiful country. It's really beautiful.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1 p.m. at Brdo Castle. In his remarks, he referred to Minister of Foreign Affairs Dimitrij Rupel of Slovenia. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Exchange With Reporters Prior to Discussions With President Vladimir Putin of Russia in Kranj

June 16, 2001

Q. Mr. President, any thoughts about this first meeting?

President Putin. First impression? It was a good first impression.

President Bush. I rest my case. [*Laughter*] We're going to have a very good meeting, and I've been looking forward to this for a long period of time. We find we have a lot in common, and I'm so honored the President came here. I know it's inconvenient to travel such a long distance, Mr. President—

President Putin. We know about the very latest statements of President Bush in Warsaw, and that's a very good foundation for us to proceed.

President Bush. Thank you, all.

NOTE: The exchange began at 2:45 p.m. at Brdo Castle. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this exchange.

The President's News Conference With President Putin in Kranj

June 16, 2001

President Bush. Good afternoon. President Putin and I have just concluded 2 hours of straightforward and productive meetings. We had a good discussion of our views of Russian-American relations and of the changing world at the beginnings of this new century. Our countries have common interests, and we share great responsibilities.

My meeting with President Putin today is an important step in building a constructive, respectful relationship with Russia, a relationship that has the potential to benefit not only our two countries but also the world. Russia is an important country with vast potential. When Russia and the United States work together in a constructive way, we can make the world a safer and more prosperous place.

I enjoyed the opportunity to meet President Putin in person for the first time. I am convinced that he and I can build a relationship of mutual respect and candor. And I'm convinced that it's important for the world that we do so.

More than a decade after the cold war ended, it is time to move beyond suspicion and toward straight talk, beyond mutually assured destruction and toward mutually earned respect. As we work together to address the world as it is, not as it used to be, it is important that we not only talk differently; we also must act differently.

We have great opportunities to cooperate on economic, commercial, regional, and security issues. President Putin and I have agreed to launch an extensive dialog about a wide range of issues that we can constructively address together.

We also discussed the importance of sound investment climate to improve Russia's future economic prosperity. I was so impressed that he was able to simplify his tax code in Russia with a flat tax. I'm not so sure I'll have the same success with our Congress.

We must continue a dialog, so I'm prepared to send both Secretary O'Neill and Secretary Evans to Moscow soon to further our discussions. I want to encourage Russian